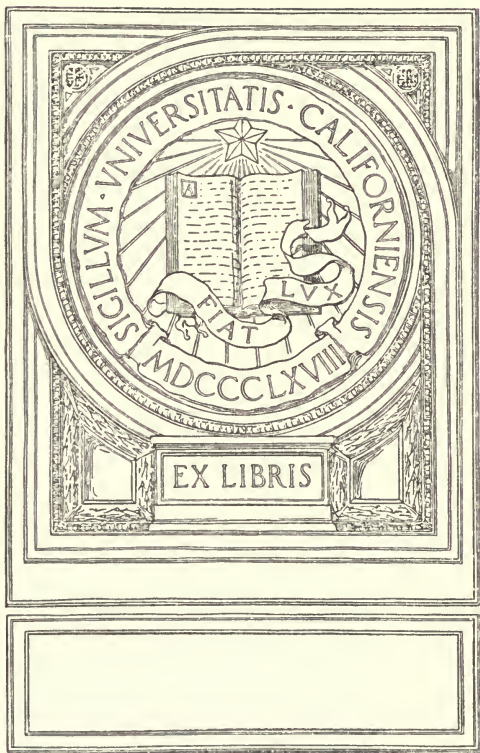


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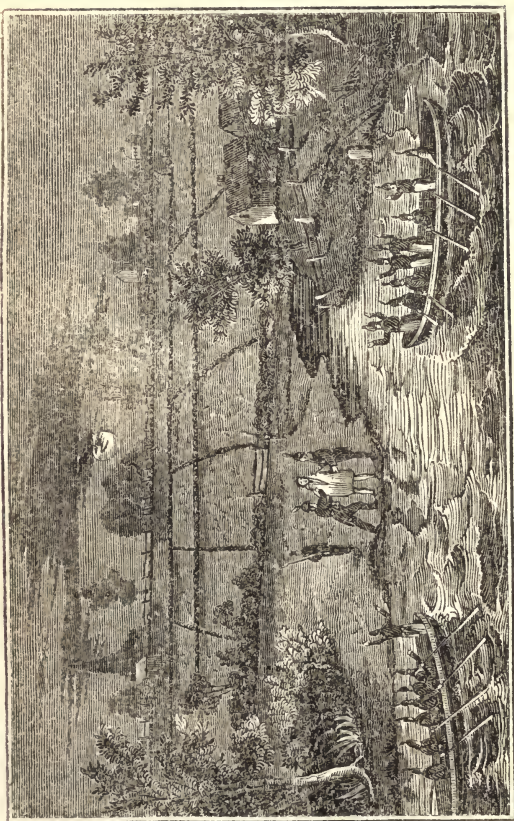
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John T. Pope



CAPTURE OF PRESCOTT.



BIOGRAPHY  
OF  
REVOLUTIONARY HEROES;

CONTAINING THE LIFE OF  
BRIGADIER GEN. WILLIAM BARTON,

AND ALSO, OF  
CAPTAIN STEPHEN OLNEY.

"Thy spirit, Independence, let me share ;  
Lord of the lion-heart and eagle-eye ;  
Thy footsteps follow with my bosom bare,  
Nor heed the storms that howl along the sky."

BY MRS. WILLIAMS, C. R. A.  
AUTHOR OF "RELIGION AT HOME," "ARISTOCRACY," "TALES, NATIONAL  
AND REVOLUTIONARY," &c. &c.

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## EXPLANATION OF THE PLATE.

*Prescott between Colonel Barton and Lieutenant Wilcox, on the shore.*—There are two inaccuracies in the Plate: one, the stream which empties into the bay, has here the appearance of a large river; but is only a brook. And the house and barn, on the right, are not on the shore, or near it, but in reality, only about 400 or 500 feet from the Overing place, which is seen indistinctly, in the distance. The Engraver's imagination has supplied a moon, too, but General Barton says, "there was no moon, but a star-light night."

## P R E F A C E .

THERE is no species of writing so difficult as biography, and in an especial manner when it chances to be of some public character. To draw upon one's imagination, if the writer is gifted with any, is comparatively a work of little difficulty ; but where one is pinned down to stubborn facts, facts in the memory of men too, where the least deviation, the most trifling irregularity, even the mistake of a date, would subject one to be torn to pieces by the critics, is an affair of no small labor and anxiety.

In the present instance we are called to write on a theme of infinite interest, to all our countrymen certainly, but one so hacknied that it is almost impossible to say any thing new on the subject. The history of every old soldier in the Revolution, is in fact but a repetition of the Revolution itself. Wherever they took the trouble to keep a memorandum of the events of their lives it would be impossible to give it in such a way as to make it understood without much repetition. To write such a biography then, in a way to make it interesting to the public, is an effort of no ordinary magnitude. To add to the difficulties of such a work, there are two classes of readers to please. One class is excessively offended if there is any thing in the story that sounds like romance, forgetful that truth is truth, let it be clothed in what language it may. They take offence if any thing like sentiment, or we had like to have said, *refinement*, is to be found in the whole book, and cavil at every sentence which is not confirmed by the pages of history, or attested to upon oath.

Again, there is another class of readers directly opposite in taste and judgment, who are continually fretting because there is not more of ornament. "What signifies," say they, "to confine one's self like a log-book, to the plain, straightforward, downright occurrences of every-day life, if the narrative is only interesting, whose business is it whether

all of it is true? We want to be entertained; we do n't want a simple detail of the events of the war; we have read them over a thousand times, (they always say as many as that,) and we want something new, some wonderful adventures, some hair-breadth escapes, something that will make a man's hair rise on his head to read, or throw him into convulsions of laughter." Even on this, readers are divided. One says, "if the story is not witty, I shall not like it;" another, "I hope it will be serious; if a book can't draw tears from one, there is no interest in it;" and another, "if there is nothing to terrify in it, it cannot be worth reading." The writer of these sheets has no recollection of having been so tormented at any time, while preparing a work for the press, by repeated and most earnest requests, first, "that it may have no romance about it," and again, "that it may be all romance," or what is equivalent to it, that it may be such a mixture that it will be impossible to tell the one from the other. Amidst all these contending opinions, we have endeavored to make sure of pleasing one, viz. ourselves. We conceive that a narrative of this sort should be strictly true, and we have been at very great trouble to collect all the facts which we deem it proper to insert. Many very interesting things in the lives of these persons, doubtless have never come to the knowledge of the writer, and of the anecdotes related here, some of them have been handed down by tradition, some are from the manuscript, some collected from their other papers, and some narrated by their families and friends. We consider these as proof sufficient. Those who were cotemporary and intimate with them, remember their expression of feeling on different occasions.

To those who feel it wearisome to read the histories of our revolutionary soldiers, we can only apply the mournful consolation that there will be few more to read. They and their cotemporaries are almost extinct, and with that generation, a race of men shall have passed from the stage, the like of whom we shall never see again, nor can future ages. Luxury and dissipation has done its work, in our once happy country. Never again will the simplicity and singleness of heart, the abstemiousness and self-denial, the self-devotion, integrity and uprightness, and the pure, unmingled, dis-



interested fire of patriotism, be found in any other race of men, in an equal degree. There may be individuals, and are, who rising superior to the corruptions of the age, equal some of revolutionary memory, but it is preposterous ever to expect there can be such another whole race. In the first place, circumstances can never again conspire to such formation of character. Let us, or the tyrants of Europe, be as persecuting as they will, there is not another unexplored quarter of the globe to which pilgrim feet can travel. This is Liberty's *last home*, and if it cease to be her home, she has no home on earth.

Happy for us that the question of Independence was agitated at so early a period of our history, the present race, it is to be feared, never would have achieved it. Wealth and influence have become of such importance in the eyes of by far the greater part of our population, that all other things, we fear, would become subservient to it; self-aggrandizement is now the great object. The aristocracy of wealth is riding over the heads of the community at a high rate, and but for the salutary laws by which our brave forefathers have guarded the tree of liberty, we should be in danger of a worse bondage than that from which we have escaped; but heaven be praised, that their efforts were not confined to the mere action of fighting, else had their blood been shed in vain. The salutary laws, by which wealth is made to change masters so often, will preserve us from all danger on that head. The possession of wealth, too, seems to generate such a spirit of extravagance—the lordling of to-day generally becoming the bankrupt of to-morrow, as absolutely to be a safeguard against its encroachments. All ruinous as it is to families, there is this good effect attending it; for was the immense wealth of individuals handed down from sire to son, the danger of the State would be infinitely greater. But to return.

To us there is not a more interesting being than one of those old patriots of the revolution; whether soldier or statesman, the danger to themselves at the commencement of the contest was nearly equal. When I see one of those venerable men, bending under the weight of years, and often of infirmities contracted during the exposure of their persons to the hardships of war, the tears will involuntarily force them-

selves into my eyes, while I recall in imagination the days and nights of wearisomeness and watching for our country's weal; the cold, and hunger, and nakedness, of our afflicted army during that trying period, that made us a nation, the enduring courage that not only faced the cannon's mouth, but the far greater danger of imprisonment in those loathsome and pestilential dungeons, that proved the grave of so many brave Americans, my emotions are almost overwhelming.

In enumerating the incidents of the revolution as connected with the history of our State, or the narratives of our heroes, we confess we have presented in a striking point of view, the various cruelties practiced by our political enemies during the revolution. It has been said to the writer of this, "say as little as possible on that head; it is unchristian to dwell upon the faults of our enemies, and especially of a *gallant nation*, with whom we are now at peace," and whose sins of that day are doubtless long since repented of; besides, that was comparatively a dark age, christian nations do not conduct the art of war now as they did then. In answer to such suggestions, we must say, we shall take the liberty to use our own judgment; the advice we have always remarked comes from a questionable source. It has in general come from those whose sentiments we know to be anti-republican, who have always been admirers of British institutions, and in fact, of a despotic form of government, and who often complain that "our own wants energy." There are exceptions, persons who really are so christian as to hear with pain even the faults of an enemy exposed, and who really believe what they assert, that were the thing to be tried again, we should receive very different treatment from the hands of our enemies. To such we say, we want evidence. Has the slaughter and burning of St. Eustache, St. Bernoit, and St. Dennis, proved it? has the hangings and banishments, and confiscations in the Canadas proved it? We say not, nor are we disposed to attribute the cruelties perpetrated in that region of horrors to the insubordination of British troops. We know it is not the case, we know there is not a nation in Europe where the troops are in such complete subordination, as those of the English. That England was, and is, a christian nation, is

an aggravation, a monstrous one of her guilt. Let us think for a moment, of the officers of an army who profess the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving up a conquered city to pillage and rapine ; of men going to the table of the Lord, sanctioning crimes at which the very heathen would blush ; of ministers and others in authority, sanctioning the conduct of such officers ; and of a King, or perchance a *Virgin Queen*, upholding them ; of a woman, aye, and a christian one, too, quietly looking on, and beholding the wives and daughters of her subjects exposed to the insults of her brutal soldiery, because the fathers, or brothers, or husbands, sigh for that liberty which God has made all men to enjoy, since he has made them "free and equal." That there are exceptions, that there are individuals of that and of other despotic nations, who recoil at the idea of such cruelties and monstrous crimes as were once sanctioned in our country, and now are in Canada, we doubt not, but alas ! their solitary aid would nought avail against the arm of power.

The writer of this was recently favored with the perusal of a paragraph in a letter from a British officer in Lower Canada to his wife now residing in the United States. We dared not ask to copy it, but according to the best of our recollection it ran thus :

"Come not here ! Scenes are enacting in this country that no female ought to witness. There is a sickness at heart that almost unmans me, when I think of the cruelties practiced here, which I am not only obliged to witness, but to be almost a partaker in ; that is, obliged to permit my men to commit the most horrible crimes, because I dare not countermand the orders of my superiors. Happy the lot of those unfortunate, though rebellious subjects, who fall by the sword. They cannot live to know that their fireside comforts are for ever destroyed.

You have doubtless heard of the massacre at St. Eustache, but the particulars, I venture to say, have never yet been told, in that happy land where you sojourn." I recollect something was said about throwing up his commission, but have forgotten what, but as the beautiful and interesting young English woman is still in this country, I conclude he has not done so.

These are ungrateful subjects, and we hasten to contemplate the blessings which the exertions of our brave forefathers procured.

Is there a being insensible of the happiness we derive as a people, from our present form of government? We may differ in opinion with respect to the merits of rulers, and on minor points of government, but can we cast a glance over our favored land and not exult at the name of American? Does not our hearts leap within us while we contrast our situation with that of the subjects of despotic governments? All monarchies are more or less so. All the comforts of life are within our reach, and indeed to the industrious and persevering, most of its elegancies. There are no persons poor in these United States, but those who choose to be so. Of the suffering poor (if any such are to be found) nine tenths are made so by intemperance, and the remainder by idleness and wilful improvidence. Labor in our country is so high, that if a man worked only half his time, he might manage to lay up something. And of those who are reduced by sickness and become objects of charity, not one in ten but what might have provided against such calamity by prudent management while in health. It is really matter of curious speculation to think what would be the change and how it would be borne, if our country were suddenly to be brought under a government like that of Great Britain. How would the mechanics, farmers, and laboring classes feel to have the price of labor suddenly reduced to less than one third of what it is now, and half of that third to be paid out for taxes upon every thing we could name; to have a tenth part of one's produce to pay tythes to support a church, though perhaps the very best one that human wisdom ever devised, or that human experience knows any thing about, yet different from the belief of two thirds of the community, and then worse than all, to see the *would-be-nobility* suddenly become such in reality—him who now but struts his hour upon the stage, exalted to lord it over vassals and dependants, not only through life, but down to remote generations through his descendants. Powers of mercy! How some of our purse-proud merchants, and corporation men, and insolent, aristocratic and domineering lawyers would look with the star and garter! If



the ungartered leg scarcely deigns to touch the earth now, we may well suppose the gartered one would tread on necks. We just make out to bear with men who have to condescend now to coax people into quarrels, or whose business obliges them to spend part of their time behind a counter. But it is, as we observed, a curious speculation, how certain persons would appear were that necessity removed.

Dreadful has been the struggle to avoid such a state of things. The great foundation has been successfully laid, and though the warfare is never to cease, though like that between the flesh and the spirit it will endure throughout all time; yet honored, yea, forever blessed be the memory of those who laid it broad and deep, and laid it in their blood. I pity those who never felt the glow of patriotism, who can stand upon the battle field, where our brave forefathers contended for liberty, and not feel his bosom thrill with intense and irrepressible emotion. Spirits of the martyred dead, of those who fell in our country's cause! I have realized your presence in those places, as much as I ever did that of my most familiar friend; I have seen your venerable shades move in the rustling trees, and heard your voices in the whispering winds. Often "when evening has poured her shadows o'er the plain," I have walked forth to enjoy your society. From Bunker's Hill to Ticonderoga, and from thence to Virginia, I have traced your footsteps. Not a lake, or a river, but what has spoken of your prowess. Not a town, or scarcely a village, but what has something to tell of you. From the source of the mighty Hudson, to the mouth of the Chesapeake, every thing has reminded us of you. Your country is your monument.

It is surprising with how much indifference some people can view the places connected with Revolutionary history; but there are instances in which even children are moved. I recollect the first time I visited Philadelphia, in walking up Chestnut-street, a little lad of only seven years of age, pointed out to me the State-House, from the balcony of which, Jefferson read the Declaration of Independence; and, said the little fellow, while his eyes sparkled with animation, "The very bell, too, is there, which *struck the first note for Liberty!*" What a remark for such a child.

It was late when I returned, and my little guide was not

with me ; but I could not forbear to look into the house, which, though now solitary, stood most invitingly open. I looked into the room where the immortal signers of the Declaration of Independence set their seal to that instrument. It was untenanted, and I ventured in. Its spacious vaulted roof, and the antique fashion of the heavy moulding, spoke of ancient times. The last rays of an intensely hot sun yet lingered on the crimson curtains and reflected a mellow light upon the walls, and upon the long table, where the purest, the best, the noblest, and most patriotic company of men the world ever saw, had sat on that momentous occasion. With a heart swelling with unutterable emotion, I stood until the last gleam of day was withdrawn, the shades of twilight were gathering around ; and it was then, that in imagination, the shades of the departed patriots passed in review before me. It was but a dim and shadowy outline, and although I could not paint it like Joel Barlow, I enjoyed the "*vision of Columbus*." Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Hancock, and the whole host of worthies were there. A full length statue of Washington, exalted on a pedestal, graces the head of the table, his elbow resting on a book of laws ; the roll of the Constitution in his hand, and trampling under foot the Charter of the Colony. The portraits of William Penn and Lafayette adorn the walls, where it is contemplated to add the six Presidents. My delightful visions were at length disturbed by the entrance of a venerable looking person, who has the care of the house. He seemed somewhat surprised to find a lady standing there alone, but quite delighted with the interest expressed in the scene. The house was, evidently, his idol ; and he was pleased to communicate every thing connected with it. I promised to call again and see the bell, which was engraven with a text, or motto, from the 25th of Leviticus, 10th verse. "*Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land.*"

We trust these ebullitions of feeling, which to many may appear like digression, will be pardoned. We trust, that though luxury and effeminacy have done much to banish simplicity, it has not so effectually hardened the heart and dulled the senses, that patriotic feeling is utterly contemned. We know that, though from courtesy, persons have been tolerated in decrying our government, and speaking evil of

the institutions of liberty, and in some instances have even dared to abuse the privilege of addressing their fellow-citizens on the birth-day of our independence—to do this, without being put out of the house ; yet they have been visited by deserved contempt, and that no man dared raise his voice to apologise for them.

We know it has been quite fashionable among many of the lords of creation, to ridicule every thing like patriotic feeling among women, except at certain seasons, when their services were needed ; and we consider it as one of the remnants of barbarism, that knowledge, education, and refinement, have not yet entirely done away. But at the season of the Revolution, and during our last war, it was found very convenient, not only to refrain from ridiculing, but even to laud and admire it ; but at all other times they have been dubbed as “ meddlers with subjects *above their comprehension* ;” “ petticoated politicians,” with a host of other ill-mannerly appellations. For ourselves, we recollect that some of our earliest impressions of this sort, were communicated by females, cotemporary with the heroes of the revolution ; and we have at this moment, a very distinct recollection when a little child, of becoming deeply interested to inquire into the history of our Independence, from the conversation of an old lady of that period. The circumstance that occasioned it, was from my inquiring of her “ what the bells were all tolling for.” (It was on the reception of the news of the decapitation of Louis XVI.) She was weeping ; but I recollect she took the handkerchief from her face and drawing me towards her, held my little hands in hers, while she answered solemnly—

“ My dear, it is for the death of the King of France.” “ And who” said I, looking up with childish wonder, “ who was the King of France ?” She replied, while the big tears stole quietly down her cheeks, “ He was one of America’s best friends. He supplied us with money, when we needed it, sent us food and raiment and all other conveniences we were suffering for, and men to fight our battles. He became our friend when we had no other ; a friend in need, and now wicked men have cut his head off.” And here her tears redoubled. I remember I left her, and went to look into the street to see if the men were crying, but to my surprise,

not one appeared different from their usual manner. I saw several females that day and all appeared more or less affected. And though I did not exactly comprehend the services of the French monarch, yet from that time I conceived the highest respect for the feelings and opinions of women on those subjects, and imbibed a feeling of interest in the history of my country, which has never left me from that hour to this. And should the revolutionary tales which from time to time have been before the public, afford half the pleasure in the perusal, they have done in the composition, the writer of these will have nothing more to ask for. Aside from the interruptions, there has been no higher gratification, than when stealing from the world, she has been permitted to trace the history of the departed champions of American Independence.



## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

It has often been a question, where the first active opposition to the encroachments of the British Government was offered. We believe the question may now be fairly settled, and that honor awarded to Newport, R. I. The first act of popular resistance to the arbitrary conduct of the officers of that government, it appears, was in that town. It was in the destruction of an armed British sloop, called the *Liberty*, which had been fitted out in Boston to enforce the revenue laws, and was directed to examine and detain all vessels suspected of violating them. It was caused by the sloop firing upon a Captain Packwood, of Connecticut, who in resentment for the liberties taken in searching his brig, had left there without permission. Great discontent had been felt previous, at the arbitrary and overbearing deportment of the officers; and the populace had got to the right temperament to seize the first occasion that presented to chastise their insolence. Accordingly, having assembled a large company on the Long wharf, where the sloop of war lay, they demanded the man who fired at Captain Packwood. The officers of the sloop made a feint of looking for him, but contrived not to find the right one; and probably fearing a scene of violence, the whole company, except one mate, abandoned the sloop and came on shore. The populace then went on board, cut her cables, and she drifted over to a wharf on the Point. Here she was again boarded, her masts cut away, and all her armament and stores of war thrown overboard; they then scuttled her, and left her to the mercy of the waves. They subsequently set fire to her, and taking her boats, dragged them through the streets to the Parade, where they set fire to them. Tradition says, "that owing to the keels of the boats being shod with iron, a stream of fire followed them as they were dragged over the pavement with violence." This, in the year 1769 (if we except the general spirit of insubordination manifested at the act passed in September, 1764, to tax the Colonies, and the famous stamp act trod close upon its heels,) was the first.

A very general impression on the minds of persons who have never read that act, seems to be, that it was a small addition to the price of paper for deeds, bonds, wills, and a few more conveyances, such as one generally calls upon a lawyer to write; and we recollect hearing the question propounded more than once—What great evil could there be in having to buy a peculiar kind of paper a little more costly to execute an instrument on, which was rarely wanted and must be recorded, and therefore, not improperly bearing some stamp upon it? Having never read the act ourselves, we were unable to give the particulars, but since having perused it, we are not at a loss to discover the cause of the burning indignation manifested by all classes of people. It almost surpasses belief, that the Brit-

ish Government could have believed it possible for any class of men to submit to ; to think of giving a duty upon every thing, the smallest piece of paper for even receipts and notes of hand ; the price rising in proportion to the sum specified. Thus, for a piece of paper for securing a sum of money between 10 and £20, one shilling ; between 20 and £30, one shilling and sixpence, and so on. For a license to sell spirituous liquors, the paper cost ten shillings, and for retailing wine a stamp paper cost £4 ; that was " in case they did not take out a license for selling spirituous liquors," thus punishing the venders of wine, because they did not sell rum. Conscience ! Not only that it would have taken the half of every man's substance, a person who did much business would have to keep running all the time, unless he laid in a cargo of these papers. It seems, however, that they were never used in the Colonies, and in general not permitted to land. An advertisement for a newspaper must be stamped, and cost two shillings. This act, as well it might be, was the cause, and doubtless, cause sufficient, had no other existed, for a dismemberment of the Colonies. No person of even ordinary intellect, but what saw in this, the beginning of a contest, destined only to end in the utter separation of the Colonies from the parent government.

From this time, though the odious stamp act was shortly repealed, the affections of the people were alienated, and each subsequent motion watched with jealousy. The duty upon tea, so highly resented some years after, was only three cents upon a pound ; but knowing it was going to form a precedent for greater exactions and oppressions, was, as every one knows, resisted with a degree of violence that set the whole country in a flame, and was the immediate precursor of the Revolution. The destruction of the sloop *Liberty* in Newport made no other alteration except in the management of the thing. The revenue laws still continued to be enforced with much severity, but the conduct of the officers was more guarded. They still *adhered* to the *right* of search, but dared not put it in practice, until about three years after, in June 1772, one Lieutenant Duddington was stationed in Narraganset Bay, in a tender called the *Gaspee*, for the enforcement of the revenue laws, (which of themselves, by the way, were exceedingly oppressive,) seemed disposed to exercise his authority with a high hand. There were others then in the harbor of Newport, who had commenced the old method of compelling every vessel to round to, and suffer an universal overhauling, or in case of refusal, they had ventured in several instances to send a few shot after them, not to do much damage to be sure, but just to show their authority.

On the 10th of June, the commander of the *Gaspee*, who had for some days past boarded, searched, and otherwise insulted several outward and homeward bound vessels, attacked a sloop called the *Hannah*, a Providence and New-York packet, commanded by one Lindsey, of Providence, ordering her to "come to." The packet, however, took no notice, but kept straight on her course up Narraganset Bay. Lieutenant Duddington then called out, and ordered her to take down her colors in passing (that is, to lower them

to the Royal standard,) still the sloop kept on, when the Gaspee fired on her and gave chase. Captain Lindsey, whose light craft could run much nearer the shore, managed to decoy the tender, until they had, in following the sloop, run upon a point, about five miles from Providence, called Nanquit Point, where they were fairly aground. Captain Lindsey made all sail then for Providence, and reported the affair. Great indignation was expressed on the occasion, and it being suggested by some spirited individuals in the town that it would be easy to board and burn her, where she then was, they forthwith proceeded to drum up for volunteers, literally, for they employed a man by the name of Price to go about street with a drum inviting all good citizens to meet at a place named —, to concert measures for surprising the Gaspee. In the evening, about 54 persons collected, and, calling themselves Narraganset Indians, proceeded to the place where the unfortunate Gaspee still lay aground, where they boarded her, wounding the commander and putting the men on shore. They then set fire to the vessel and burnt her up. The Point has since been called Gaspee Point. Of the 54 said to be engaged in that affair only one is now living, viz. Col. Ephraim Bowen. John Brown, a merchant of Providence, acted as a kind of leader, calling himself the Sheriff of Kent. They generally had some title by which they designated each other. The names of those brave and resolute citizens, as far as they have come to our knowledge, are as follows :

Captain Benjamin Dunn,  
 Captain Benjamin Page,  
 Captain Turpin Smith,  
 Captain John B. Hopkins,  
 Joseph Bucklin,  
 Captain Shepard.

John Brown,  
 Com. Abraham Whipple,  
 Colonel Ephraim Bowen,  
 Dr. John Mawney,  
 Captain Harris,  
 Joseph Jencks.

There were but about fifteen men in the Gaspee, but when the boats came along side of her, they pretended to make some show of resistance, but Duddington being wounded at the first onset, they immediately desisted. The commander was carried below, and Dr. John Mawney and Col. Ephraim Bowen went down and dressed his wounds, after which they put him in a boat and sent him after his men ashore at Pawtuxet. He was received into the house of a Mr. Rhodes, and permitted to send to one of the ships off Newport, for his physician, who attended him several days before his removal. A bolder project, and more harmlessly executed, we believe has seldom been hazarded.

From this time, the frequent discontents in the seaports were followed up by similar tumults. The destruction of the tea in the harbor of Boston, occurred next year after the Gaspee affair, viz. 1773. The beginning of 1774 was signalized by the spirited resolutions of the different ports. Newport was one of the first, who, in town-meeting, passed resolutions to refrain from the use of tea, and to oppose its sale in the Colony.

Early in the month of June, 1775, there was a very serious disturbance in the town of Newport. A vast assemblage of the inhab-

itants of the town collected in consequence of a report that a quantity of flour was to be shipped to Halifax, to victual the British fleet. The flour was procured by George Doane, a very warm partizan of the government. It was at the time the squadron, under the command of Wallace, lay off the harbor, and doubtless that was the intention.

The people collected around the granary in great numbers, and seeing a large number of drays collected to carry it to Doane's store, which was on the Point; it was found impossible, however, to carry it, as the excited populace knocked it off as fast as they could load it, staving in the heads of the barrels. Finally, they succeeded in stopping it. Three companies had just been raised in Newport to send to Roxbury, viz. Captains Topham's, Tew's, and Flagg's. Two of these had marched on, but Capt. Tew's had not yet gone; and they turned out to aid the people, and proceeded to the Point, to the residence of George Doane. One Jabez Champlin was the High Sheriff of the county of Newport, and he very prudently begged the military to keep back in the lanes running east and west, unless they should be called for, so that the marines, who were already landed to carry off the flour, might not see them, and blood be shed; and if they appeared in front, they would immediately be shot. The marines were stationed on the wharf and in the yard of Doane's house, and the high sheriff rode up to Doane's steps and commenced a parley with him, and after some earnest and passionate conversation, Doane told him he was willing to deliver up the flour into the hands of any suitable gentleman in town. Upon this, out steps Wallace on the steps with his sword drawn, and flourishing it round several times over the sheriff's head, and then pointing it up in the air, exclaimed, "I defy the town." Among others who were very wroth on the occasion, was one Capt. John Grimes, the same who afterwards commanded a galley out of Newport, and subsequently, one of 26 guns, out of Boston, called the *Minerva*. His house was close by, and he ran home in great haste, and brought out his gun, and powder horn, and bullets, to shoot Wallace; but the people near him prevented, and carried the day without a resort to arms; the British gave up the point, and the flour was all carried into the granary and replaced, and a military guard set over it, until such times as they could get it off. It was then carried to Roxbury to our army, under a strong military guard. The man who commanded that guard is now living, Issachar Cozzens, by name; recently he was living with his son at West Point. The flour was in reality the property of Doane, he having purchased it previously, on purpose to send to Halifax. He was a violent tory, and went off; his property was afterwards confiscated.

In fact, there was a vast many tories in Rhode-Island, particularly on the Island, at the commencement of the troubles; and about six months before Newport was taken by the British, Gen. Washington despatched General Lee to Newport, to overhaul suspected persons, and either compel them to take the oath of allegiance to the Congress, or be brought prisoners to Roxbury. General Lee, attended by his Aid, Mr. ———, of Newport, and one hundred Vir-



ginia riflemen, rode into the town just at dark of a very rainy night, and without stopping scarce a moment for refreshment, proceeded to hunt up the suspected inhabitants, summoning them before him to take the oath. The young man, his aid, proceeded on this important office, and among others the two gentlemen in whose employ he had been previous to the outbreak. These persons, William and Joseph Wanton, obliged to rise and go before the General, at the command of their former clerk, hesitated for some moments to put their hands to the very severe oath which Gen. Lee had written down, and required them to sign, but he told them and the others, that "it was a matter of perfect indifference with him; if they did not, he should immediately order them under arrest, and take them on to Roxbury." The Episcopal clergyman, Mr. Bissel, in particular, hung back, and asked the General if he really meant to administer the oath to him in the unqualified sense it was written in, and if he would not alter it in his case. General Lee said he would alter it; he then sat down and wrote a new one more binding than the other, and compelled the reluctant clergyman to sign it, or take the alternative of going to Roxbury. It is solemn to reflect that these persons all forswore themselves, and afterwards gave all the aid in their power to the enemy, only venturing to show themselves in their true colors, after the British had landed at Newport.

An old gentleman now living in Rhode-Island, narrated this scene to the writer, and says he still remembers the gallant bearing of the General and company of Virginia riflemen, as they passed through the Island on their way back to Roxbury next morning in martial array, and remembers his own expressions of admiration, and the sneer of the person to whom he made the remark, a Mr. Redwood, a tory, as it proved after, "that they were only a *company of their convicts* sent over to Virginia."

Upon the British coming to the Island this gentleman, who owned a team, was pressed into their service, and compelled to work for them at \$2 per day. He relates the craft made use of, in the management of the receipts, by his British employers. They would not allow the laborers to specify the sum in the receipt, thus giving them the opportunity of charging their Government with a much larger sum. Upon the retreat of Sullivan's brigade, numbers escaped with them from the island, - this man for one; he was that day employed with his team, and, said he, "upon driving my team up to the side of the hill where I had to go, I made out to escape, and have never heard from it, from that day to this."

Upon the arrival of the news of the burning of the Gaspee in England, three Commissioners were sent by the British government to investigate the business, and make proclamation of reward for the persons of those who burnt it. They had the lower room in the Court-House in Newport opened, where the elections were held, and with great state and solemnity paraded themselves on the high seat, overshadowed by tremendous great wigs. The proclamation was to any who could give information of the persons concerned, or leading to the detection of persons concerned in the burning of



the Gaspee: This was done for three days in succession, but the proclamation and the wigs failed to frighten any one into giving information. The same solemn farce was then acted over in Providence, with the same success. The reward offered was £1000 for the Sheriff of Kent, the name by which John Brown was called; £1000 for the leaders, and £500 for "any of all the clan."

We would remark that in all the accounts we have seen, of the destruction of the Gaspee, it has been asserted that the company, or a part of them, were disguised as Narraganset Indians. This was not the case. They were not disguised in the least. They merely called themselves Narraganset Indians. They took care however not to call each other by name. In fact there was very little talking done. They did not go down in the boats until after dark, and having accomplished their business, took them and returned.

## LIFE OF GEN. BARTON.

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WILLIAM BARTON was born in Warren, a beautiful little village standing at the head of a small inlet or cove, on the east side of Naraganset Bay, in the county of Bristol, Rhode-Island, and about ten miles from Providence. It is on the post road from that place to Newport, and distant about twenty miles.

It has been observed by more than one writer whose acquaintance with human nature was undisputed, that the formation of character was much owing to the kind of scenery by which we are surrounded in our early days, and every day's observation tends to establish the truth of the remark. But however this in a measure may be and doubtless is the case, there is something still more omnipotent in the early formation of character than this, and that is, the sports of childhood, and the companions who participate in them. The future soldier, and the immortal capturer of Prescott, it is true, drew his first breath in a small village, on the sea side, where images of peace and serenity, sights and sounds of rural happiness met his view. A more romantic and picturesque place is seldom seen. The village itself is singularly beautiful, and then the tongue of land opposite, which runs far out into the Bay, and covered as it is with pretty farms, neat gardens and cot-

tages, and beyond—"the sea! the sea! the wide unbounded sea, with its blue above and blue below"—take it altogether, affords a most charming prospect, but then never did quiet scenery boast of a more expert, daring, hair-brained, and mad-cap set of boys, than this same pretty village. Its contiguity to the sea afforded means of constant enterprise and peril, and was a continued temptation to acts of daring and hazardous experiment, and bred a familiarity with danger, which proved a bane to the happiness of many a careful father and anxious mother. For ages, the lads of Warren and Bristol have been celebrated for their adventurous spirit, and a very large proportion of the best sailors in the State have been raised in those two towns, particularly in the former. It is no uncommon thing to see boys that we should scarcely think able to manage a boat in pleasant weather, scouring the coast for many miles around in the most boisterous seasons, and with as much apparent concern as we should feel sitting at our parlour fires. Not that accidents have not happened by which many of them have found a watery grave; but they have never operated to intimidate the survivors.

Of the two long strait streets which form the principal part of the village, the one broad and handsome, with a profusion of cherry trees, on the direct route to Newport, is the principal, but not the favorite resort of the juvenile heroes of the place. The low and sunken one called Water street, and bordered by the wharves, where the scanty shipping lay, here and there a mast, an old scow, or a small sail boat, had many more charms for them; and it was among these that young Barton first became acquainted with danger. To steer the frail bark across the bay in a starless night, or hold the tiller when the waves ran moun-

tains high, was doubtless as high a gratification to him, as it would be to one of the lilliputian dandies of this day, to find himself at the head of the ball room. Our fathers, then, for the most part, would have looked with scorn upon the puerile and effeminate sports of their degenerate descendants.

General Barton was born on the 26th of May, 1748, and was the son of Benjamin Barton, of Warren, an honest and respectable man. He continued with his parents, enjoying the advantages of a common school education, until of a suitable age to be bound out to a trade, a part of education deemed almost indispensable in those days of blessed simplicity, when honest industry was no disgrace, and people considered it a higher honor to be known to labor in some useful employment, than to live upon other people's property, or subsist—no body knows how.

After serving his time, William set up for himself, and carried on the hatter's business in a shop of his own. He married early in life a daughter of Joseph Carver, of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, being only twenty-two when he was united to Rhoda Carver, who was two years younger than himself. Their oldest child, William, was born on the 18th of December, 1771; and their second, Benjamin, on the 20th of July, 1773.

In the enjoyment of domestic happiness, good business, and comfortable circumstances, almost any one might be supposed to be contented, and it is certain a selfish man might be so, but William Barton was not such. He loved his family, but he loved his country also, and the oppressions of the mother country, which was daily creating dissension and disquiet in the country, did not occur without occasioning unpleasant feelings in his bosom. He had long been a listener and spectator, with feelings of deep resentment, although

regard for his family at first prevented his mingling in the fray. In common with the other inhabitants of Providence, he continued to be agitated by the continual rumors and alarms which were daily coming from Boston, the then seat of war, without deciding to take a part in the contest; and it was not until after the battle of Bunker-Hill, that he decided on joining the American forces. On the day on which that memorable battle was fought, great consternation prevailed in Providence. The inhabitants were apprised of a battle somewhere; and fearing that if a general engagement took place, and the Americans should be routed or taken prisoners, the next step of the enemy would be to attack Providence, had assembled in large numbers on Prospect Hill, as it has since been called, where the guns could be heard. The scenes which there took place can be more easily imagined than described.

Various rumors were afloat, and many and contradictory reports circulated next day, but at length an official despatch from the acting commander announced the termination of the battle and its disastrous results, with the death of the brave Warren; and others, who fell during that memorable contest. The news was communicated to Mr. Barton, while at work in his hatter's shop. He took no time to deliberate, but slung his musket on his shoulder, mounted his horse, and took the road to Boston, where he offered himself as a volunteer, and entered the service.

The action of Breed's or Bunker Hill, was fought on the 17th of June, 1775, consequently General Barton joined the forces of the American army about the 19th. It was not until the 17th of the ensuing March, 1776, that the British evacuated Boston. During the intervening nine months the



service in that quarter was, as is known, most arduous.

On the 20th of December, 1775, a third son was born to General Barton, whom he called George Washington. At this time he advertised his intention of joining the army and of devoting himself to his country, and that his business would in future be conducted by Mr. Lathrop. He entered as a corporal, and by a rapid but regular advancement was soon promoted to the rank of captain.

It was while on this service, working at throwing up redoubts under the very guns of the enemy, intercepting foraging parties, and fighting in the various skirmishes with detachments of British soldiers, that Mr. Barton obtained his knowledge of military tactics. His opportunity to become acquainted, not only with danger, but with military discipline, was better than it could have been in any other part of the country, for Washington was there in person, assisted by Generals Lee and Ward. He did not indeed arrive until after General Barton had joined the forces then under command of General Putnam. But he came a few days after, and immediately commenced a reform in that division of the army. He found them without discipline, destitute of cleanliness, and miserably deficient in arms and ammunition, without order, coming and going, just as occasion suited. To rectify all these disorders was an arduous task; nevertheless they set themselves about it, and it was accomplished. At Roxbury and Boston, while on this service, General Barton became acquainted with many choice and patriotic spirits, with whom he ever afterwards kept up an intimacy. The grandfather of the writer of this narrative, captain Oliver Read, was one, and memory supplies several interesting anecdotes

related by him of the General, some of which are narrated in the life of that brave captain, in the first volume of "Tales, National and Revolutionary."

While General Barton was at Boston, troubles began to multiply nearer home. The vessels attached to the squadron of Wallace, which blockaded the harbor of Newport, though they as yet made no regular descent upon the town, yet kept them in a continual state of excitement and alarm. Threatening messages were daily sent in, such as "that the town would be burnt at such an hour next day," and the like; and this was not all. Their predatory excursions in Narraganset Bay, and the cruelty and rapacity with which they conducted in their foraging parties, was most aggravating and vexatious.

On August 1st, they came up opposite Bristol, and sent in an enormous demand for a supply of provisions. This being refused by the inhabitants, they commenced firing on the town. The peaceable and unarmed inhabitants were in no state to resist them, and finding they were likely to have their town destroyed, before help could be raised from the interior, purchased their safety by sending them 40 sheep. This was agreed on by a flag of truce. Nevertheless, they continued to lay off their harbour and occasionally harass them 24 hours after.

On the 9th of December, 1774, 200 English and Negroes went on to the northeast end of the island of Conanicut, and burnt eight farm houses, with cribs and barns, bringing off what they could and burning the rest. And this was not all: The females were stript of every thing valuable about their persons; the old men abused barbarously. Captain John Martin was one, who died next day. The expedition was conducted by

Wallace in person, who was a witness of their diabolical proceedings. Soldiers were immediately raised and sent on from the Narraganset side, but they arrived only in time to see the smouldering ruins, and hear the wailing of the defenceless inhabitants.

A few days after, the British squadron with 250 men, made a descent upon the island of Prudence, further up the Bay, where the same scenes were acted over, with this difference only that there was a small force on the island, who endeavored to make a defence, but were obliged to make a precipitate retreat, and were taken off by their boats to Warwick neck, the only thing which could have prevented their being hemmed in and cut to pieces. All this to be sure, and a vast deal more, was nothing to what was done afterwards, when Prescott and his forces were in possession of Rhode-Island, and General Pageot likewise, but it will be recollected those and similar enormities were perpetrated while England yet regarded us as her subjects ; while she professed to hold out the olive branch, and in her own language was "seeking by every means to conciliate her rebellious subjects." Of course these were only *pater-nal chastisements*. No one felt more indignation than General Barton. He returned to Providence, and for a few days sat about settling his business and arranging things for the comfort of his family, with the intention of returning to Roxbury, and again entering the service, the time having expired for which he agreed to stay ; but the situation of affairs at Newport demanded a force to be stationed on the island, and a certain number of militia being drafted for that purpose, Colonel Barton was appointed to that office. The place where he was quartered was in a house just without the town, belonging to Mr. Irish, and on the very spot

where the elegant residence of George Irish Esq. now stands, the former house having been burnt by the British. This place was about four miles from Mr. Overing's residence, on the great road leading from Newport to Bristol and Howland's ferries. During the residence of Colonel Barton at the above mentioned place, he became a great favorite with the patriot part of the population of Newport. They still remember his social qualities, his politeness, constant good humor, and patriotic sentiments, and relate many of his anecdotes, and humorous songs. It was his constant practice to reconnoiter about the Island, and it appeared there was not a nook or corner escaped him. Hence every spot of ground in that region had become familiar, a circumstance that lessened the danger a little, in the exploit he afterwards performed in that neighborhood. It became apparent, however, upon the approach of the British fleet, that Newport could make no adequate defence, and Colonel Barton was ordered to take his men to Tiverton, in other words to remove his quarters. It is not to be supposed the people of Rhode-Island sat down all this time in inglorious inactivity. Privateering had been carried on for some time before this, and with much success, as will be seen by a reference to American History. It was very successfully carried on in Rhode-Island, notwithstanding the situation of Newport. It is almost incredible what risks were run, and what hair breadth escapes were effected, eluding the vigilance of British cruisers about the harbor of Newport, and in Narraganset Bay ; numerous prizes too, and some quite important ones, at this season were carried up to Taunton, some through the narrow channel of Howland's ferry, where indeed they were protected through the Seconnett, by the guns of the fort erected on Tiverton heights,



and once in the waters of Mount Hope Bay, they were safe. There were at that time some of the bravest and most successful Captains in Rhode-Island, in both Newport and Providence, that ever sailed on the ocean. On the 3d of March, 1776, Captain Esek Hopkins, created an Admiral, and the only Admiral in the service of the United States, was dispatched on a cruise with several ships of war, in one of which the celebrated John Paul Jones was commander. Commodore Abraham Whipple commanded one, and Captain John Hopkins another; they were very successful, and after a short cruise returned deeply laden with warlike stores, bombs, cannon, small arms, powder, balls, and a quantity of copper and iron; these were seized at Nassau, New-Providence, where they had made a descent, took the forts, and brought off the Governor and a number of distinguished prisoners. On their return they fell in with a number of ships belonging to the retreating forces of Wallace, and probably would have captured them all but for their heavy loading. Commodore Whipple had an encounter with the Glasgow, the most formidable of them, and it was believed would have captured her, but for one false movement, which giving her the advantage of the wind, enabled her to escape without coming to an engagement. For this he was severely blamed; so that he thought proper to request a Court-Martial to sit on his conduct, who exonerated him from all suspicion of cowardice, and imputed it wholly to one error in judgment. Commodore Whipple was a brave and gallant man, and he afterwards fully redeemed himself during his subsequent conduct in the war. As we were then almost wholly without a navy, privateers were the usual means of annoyance to the enemy within our waters, and prodigies of valor were actually enacted by them



as they were looked to so much for defence, and other important assistance, such as carrying despatches, intercepting foraging parties, securing naval and other stores, removing families and property in exposed situations, &c., it is not strange they should have been considered as much more respectable in that day, than in this. They were then in fact the navy of the United States, if not technically so, yet operatively, though there were some even then, who were principled against such species of warfare, as they for the most part are engaged in, and who could not bring themselves to believe that the seizure of private property could in any way be justified, not even in retaliation.\*

While stationed on Tiverton, R. I. on the east side of Howland's ferry, Colonel Barton was of signal service in protecting the channel, in facilitating a correspondence with Newport, after it came into the possession of the British, under the command of General Clinton and Lord Percy, and who appointed General Prescott, the exposed and defenceless state of that ill-fated place having obliged them to surrender to the British forces, on their demand. They had however capitulated honorably, and upon condition of being permitted

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\* This brings to mind a little anecdote, which, though quite irrelevant to the subject, is nevertheless too good to be lost. Mr. B. a merchant of Providence, and a man quite celebrated afterwards for his liberality and public spirit, was the owner of a most fortunate privateer, which sailed out of the port of Providence. On one occasion, when she had just unshipped a cargo of sugars, &c. taken from a very rich prize, in rolling it into the yard, one of the hogsheads stove and a quantity of the sugar fell out. A poor woman in the neighborhood, seeing the disaster, ran and filled her apron. Mr. B. from the loft of his store called out, "What you doing there?" The poor woman, looking up, answered, "Privateering, sir."

to remove their families and effects to a safer place. It was even agreed that they should have twenty-four hours to depart in before they landed.

The waters of Narraganset Bay and Taunton River perhaps never before, and it is hoped may not again present such a scene. Every thing that could be put in requisition, was employed to bring off the poor families. Those who have nothing to lose are somehow always the most afraid of being robbed, and hence the multitude of poor and destitute beings, who are always the first to fly in dangers of this sort. Many of the rich remained, some for treasonable purposes, and some from an honest confidence in British faith ; and others from a vain hope of protecting their dwellings from spoliation. Some from sickness and disability were unable to come off at the time, and afterwards procured passports. These however were obtained in many instances with difficulty, and in others peremptorily refused. The sufferings and inconveniences of those who remained and were friendly to the American cause, was the subject of frequent communication between the British commander and Colonel Barton, as he was then styled ; and to this day, in 1838, he is gratefully remembered in Newport by some of the oldest inhabitants and descendants of those to whom he rendered on such occasions prompt and efficient services.

Colonel Barton was walking one day near the shore in deep reflection about the fate of a small sloop from Providence, which he had engaged for a few days to bring some much needed supplies to the fort. There were twenty chances to one she had been captured in the Bay, and that their enemies were then rioting on the spoils of what was intended to fill the mouths of his impatient soldiers. A commander does not feel very pleas-

antly when threatened with the prospect of having to put his men upon short allowance. The sun went down, and no sloop appeared, but it was a beautiful evening and the Colonel continued to traverse the shore, and ever and anon to turn his eyes in the direction of Fall River, for from the point of land projecting out just below that romantic village, she would first be descried. At length a dark speck was visible, just turning the point, it enlarged and became more distinct, and bending his head he descried her mast against the clouds. Overjoyed, the Colonel rubbed his hands and summoned several gentlemen who chanced to be in the fort to enjoy the sight. Silently and cautiously the little craft crept along the shore, until she arrived at the landing place, when the Colonel leaped on board followed by his guests. The first object he saw was a woman. "In the name of heaven, Rosa, how came you here?" was his first exclamation. The person addressed was Rosanna Hicks, a next door neighbor, and as may well be believed, a woman of singular resolution. These boats were very small and very inconvenient. After a whole week in making the passage, having for the most part to skulk round the shore in the dark, and in continual danger if descried by the enemy, either of being captured or blown to the bottom. Yet in this boat this woman, instigated by no feelings but those of gratitude and humanity, had embarked in order to rescue a captive family from the island, and, "How do you expect to get at them?" asked the Colonel. "Why, to get you to help me, to be sure," said Rosa, not the least intimidated. "Cannot you send some trusty soldier to Newport with me." The Colonel paused. At length said he, "Well, come up and we will see in the morning what can be done." No, she must go that night,

nothing else would do ; the case was a pressing one. The family was Captain Read's ; the wife ill ; the husband absent ; lived in a lonely place at Easton's beach ; was hourly exposed to insult, and constantly terrified by the neighborhood of the Hessian soldiers." The Colonel looked perplexed. At length a gentleman, who had become interested by the simple eloquence of Rosa, stepped up and offered his horse and chaise to carry her, if the Colonel could find a safe and respectable escort. "She can have her choice of my soldiers," said the Colonel. Rosa immediately selected a Mr. Larchar, a neighbor and distant connexion of her family, and they set out, after the necessary directions, on their journey to the beach ; and in what manner they procured the passport, the countersign, &c. does not belong to this story, but at noon next day, Rosa again presented herself with her friend and three little children to go up with the boat which was to return to Providence that day. The boat had been charged with despatches and therefore could not wait; but the Colonel assured them there would be a chance again in a day or two, and advised them to keep as near the encampment as possible. There was then a poor widow residing in a small cottage in the neighborhood, by the name of Thankful Irish. She had fled from Newport on the first news of the coming of the British. It was not the first time the Colonel had given quarters to distressed families in her humble cottage. He was kind enough to go up next day and inform them there was a gentleman coming up by land who would bring one of the ladies in his chaise. They were unable to accept of the civility. Mrs. Read was quite ill, and on the next evening gave birth to a son, in the dismal little hut, which contained only



one room and a closet, and loft overhead. The unfortunate lady was impressed with the idea she should not survive, and nothing but the kind exertions of the Colonel, who on this occasion discovered all the zeal in the cause of humanity that any one could exert, to human view saved her; he sent every assistance that could be procured, went in person to try to reassure her, and sent an express immediately to the commander in chief at Boston to have the husband released upon a furlough, and at the end of ten days procured a passage for the family in a packet bound to Pawtuxet.

Captain Read was the maternal grandfather of the writer, and these particulars were gathered from Rosa herself as well as from the family of Captain Read.

One other circumstance connected with the story of this family cannot be omitted, as it tends to exhibit the character of Colonel Barton in a light entirely different from what we should look for in a camp at the present day, and we hope we shall be excused for the repetition.

There was in the house where the Colonel was quartered, a young lady of considerable beauty and very prepossessing manners. She was young and ignorant of the world, and unsuspecting of guile. It was the fortune of the Colonel (then a very good looking man) to interest this girl in a very uncommon degree, and she did not seek to disguise it. The other officers all assured her he was not married, although he himself asserted he was. Still she was prone to believe what she wished she did not, and continued to lavish those attentions on him which no lady ought to bestow upon a married man.

Rosanna Hicks came up the river with three young children of Mrs. Read, and Colonel Barton sent word to her to stop at his quarters before she



went to her friend. They were just sitting down to their morning mess, and the young woman described was pouring out coffee. Rosa had been out on the river two nights and one day on her return, and was much exhausted, but he would compel her to sit down and breakfast with them. There were several officers present, and a clergyman of the Episcopal church. As he said he wanted Rosa's evidence, she thought there was no excuse to be made, and submitted with as good a grace as possible.

After breakfast, she demanded to have her evidence taken. "Well, then, said the Colonel, I want you to tell these gentlemen whether I am or am not a married man." "Why, to be sure you are," said Rosa, "and by the way, Mrs. Barton called to me when I started, desiring me to tell you they were all well."

The officers, she observed, were stifling with laughter one moment, and looked very grave the next; and she at first thought it some joke to herself. But chancing to see the young female before mentioned, glide out of the room, pale as ashes, she divined the business. Rosa was a plain, sensible woman, and she made the quotation when relating this anecdote, "that he was the greatest General who conquered himself." When we consider the very great temptation that persons confined from society, shut up, as it were, in a camp, are under, to seize upon any thing that promises amusement, we must certainly think there was some merit in resisting it, merely because it was calculated to give pain to another. There was a restlessness in the Colonel, interested as he felt, too, in the cause of the country, that made a life of idleness at this period of his life, extremely irksome to him. He did not want to eat the bread of idleness, and his mind was con-

tinually at work to contrive some way in which he could be more useful, and do something for his country. He had at various times employed spies upon the island, to ascertain the exact situation of the British forces in Newport ; and although their reports were something of a contradictory nature, a design had been maturing in his brain for a considerable length of time, of going there himself. He reflected, it was a mortifying circumstance that General Lee was retained in confinement, and like to be, for want of a person of equal rank to exchange for him. Not that there was any great anxiety about the fate of General Lee, or a very longing desire to see him return, the disaffection between that gentleman and General Washington had alienated the affections of the people from him ; nevertheless, there was a kind of national disgrace, a sense of humiliation in not being able to offer a suitable ransom, as he was nominally, at least, an officer of high grade in the service of the States. Besides, he was taken by stratagem ; he was surprised when at a distance from his troops, and carried off by a *coup de main*.

Without mentioning his design to any one, the Colonel deliberated long upon the feasibility of surprising General Prescott ; often on the solitary shore, he would ruminate for hours upon the plan, and while the other officers were wondering what all at once had made him so unsociable, he was unconscious that any eye was upon him.

At length, in the month of June, 1777, a Mr. Coffin made his escape from the island, and was brought to Colonel Barton's quarters. From this person he learned that General Prescott was quartered at the house of a Mr. Overing, on the west side of the island, about one mile from the shore. He described it particularly, told the number of troops stationed near it, described their position,

and several other things, all of which tended to strengthen Colonel Barton in the belief of the possibility of effecting a surprise.\* Mr. Coffin was followed next day by a deserter from the British lines, whose story confirmed the information given the preceding day. Often has the writer of this heard this action canvassed by judicious persons, and often heard them aver that had the plot been

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\*Quam, the negro who had been employed in the kitchen of Mr. Overing, had carried a very perfect account of the situation of the General in the house. But the most astonishing part of the business was, that Colonel Barton should himself have ventured into the neighborhood as a spy, to reconnoiter the enemy, previous to the formation of his plan to surprise Prescott. That, although never before communicated to the public, was certainly true. Mr. George Lawton, who has only recently deceased, was acquainted with the fact. He called at his house in the night, and knocking at his door, inquired if any persons had passed there that night. Mr. Lawton, who had then several British officers quartered in his house, felt a misgiving, but answered him in such a manner as to avoid suspicion, and pass him off as one of the British. He felt convinced if he ever should hear the voice again, he should recognize it. But it so happened, he did not, until after the evacuation of the island by the British. It was when Washington made his triumphant entry into the town, accompanied by Count Rochambeau and others. Mr. Lawton was in the next room where Colonel Barton was conversing with one of the Generals, and the door being open he recognized the voice of the spy at once, and took the opportunity afterwards to let him know it. Colonel Barton laid the injunction of silence upon him, and Mr. Lawton kept it to himself for many years; in fact, it is believed he never mentioned it publicly. The reason must be obvious. He exceeded his power, in absenting himself thus from his camp; and had it been assaulted in his absence, he would probably have been broken. Perhaps he, himself, thought the example a bad one, and for that reason wished to conceal it. The story has been told the author by three persons of responsibility, who had it from Mr. Lawton.

blown before it ripened, and the Colonel and his company been cut up by the swords of the enemy, it would have been considered as the most mad, hair-brained piece of work ever undertaken, and had he survived the slaughter, he would have been broke at least, and perhaps even dealt with with more severity. To many, however, it appears otherwise. Had it failed, it would have still been a glorious attempt to serve his country, even at the extreme peril of his life or liberty.

There was one difficulty in the mind of General Barton. The troops stationed at Tiverton were raw ones. They were not inured to service, and should they be discovered before they could get off the island, there would probably be some sharp fighting, this circumstance was in itself so discouraging that it caused him to deliberate several days after the plan had all been arranged in his mind. He dreaded to reveal any thing to his officers, lest the very great difficulties in the way should discourage them, and he could find no one to second his views. At length, after much deliberation, he communicated it in private to Colonel Stanton. He could not, it is believed, have made a more judicious choice of a confidant; he was a man brave, cool, determined, and solid in his judgment; he did not deliberate long before he assured Colonel Barton that he thought the plan feasible, and that he might wholly rely upon his aid, and hearty co-operation. Thus strengthened, the Colonel proceeded to unfold the particulars of his plot, and the means by which he designed to carry it into execution. Of Colonel Stanton's secrecy he felt no doubts, but that veteran with himself decided that it would be injudicious to confide the express object of the expedition to any other; as all depended upon secrecy, other confidants would be dangerous. Again the Colonel walked the shore,



in a long and lonely ramble. The solitary grandeur of the scene was of itself sufficient to inspire high thoughts and tempt to deeds of noble daring. On one side, the unbounded prospect of the mighty Atlantic met his view. Its ever restless waves were breaking at his feet, and its ceaseless and sullen roar sounding in his ears. Here and there a ship of war was lying at anchor, ready to catch every thing that might come in its way. The flag of Old England waved triumphant in the breeze, and the banner of the Republic appeared banished from the great highway of nations. The heart of the Colonel beat quick and hard. "I will go, said he, if I go alone. I will strike one blow for my country, if fate never permits me to strike another." He had got himself worked up to the right temperament, and he turned to retrace his steps to the encampment. In doing so the beautiful island of Rhode-Island once more met his view. He felt as though he had never seen it before. The ruthless hand of all-devastating war had indeed been there. It was now the latter part of the month of June, and the splendor of a summer sun rested upon the beautiful landscape; but no sign of cultivation was there, as ruined gardens, deserted cottages, and fields laid waste by foraging parties and by the foot of wanton spoliation, absolutely pained the senses. But yesterday it was as the garden of Eden! but now —! The Colonel was a man who could feel more than he could express. He had not the gift of eloquence, but he was not insensible to the sublime, and he felt, though he could not have described it, "the poetry of nature." Here was a scene that might have transformed almost any one into a Brutus, and he hastily turned from the contemplation of the dazzling shore, trod now by the feet of an enemy, towards the fort. Here, summoning a hasty



council of some of the most daring and confidential among them, he prepared to unveil as much of the plot as he judged prudent. The officers beside Colonel Stanton, were only five in number. Their names and rank were as follows :

Ebenezer Adams, Captain of Artillery ; Samuel Phillips, Captain ; James Potter, Lieutenant ; Joshua Babcock, Lieutenant, and John Wilcox.

To these he confided the existence of a plot, the design of a secret expedition for a secret object, the purport of which he could not then avow ; and asked if they had sufficient confidence in him to go with him, without knowing for the present, its precise object. Without the least hesitation, they all at once professed the most perfect readiness and alacrity, and agreed to set about obtaining boats immediately, calculated to hold fifty persons. There were two whale boats at the station, and the Colonel demanded five. In a few days the remaining three were procured ; and now all was ready except the men, who had not been engaged for fear of creating suspicion. The Colonel was determined to take only volunteers, and the regiment was ordered to be paraded. Colonel Barton then addressed them, telling them he was about undertaking an expedition against the enemy and wished to have forty volunteers ; and desired those who were willing to risk their lives with him to advance two paces in front. At this, the whole regiment advanced. It was an affecting scene ; each was desirous to follow to the cannon's mouth, to serve their suffering country ; new as scenes of carnage and blood were to them, they were ready to dare the onset. How gratified their commander must have felt. But all could not go, and their commander was obliged to select those whom he knew to be most expert at rowing. For well had their skill and strength in that depart-

ment been tested during their sojourn at Tiverton ; rowing up into Mount Hope Bay, and round through Bristol ferry, and up through the bay to Providence, was no small job, and might well test the skill of rowers. The characters of the candidates, however, were not overlooked ; and none were accepted but such as full reliance might be judged to be placed in. When selecting the forty, he affectionately thanked them all for their willingness. The next evening they embarked. It was on the memorable 4th of July, just one year from the time of the declaration of independence, that the adventurous party took their departure from the encampment. They proceeded in safety, favored, doubtless, by the intense darkness which usually precedes a thunder storm. They had no sooner entered Mount Hope Bay than it commenced with great violence, and they soon lost sight of each other, one only kept alongside the one the Colonel was in ; and these two did not get into Bristol until nine o'clock on the evening of the 5th, having been about twenty-six hours in the voyage across the bay of Mount Hope.

They proceeded to the quarters of the commanding officer stationed at Bristol, where they found another deserter from the British camp ; but from his blundering and incoherent story they could gain no information calculated to assist them. Here, by agreement, the party met, and Colonel Barton had the satisfaction of seeing the remainder of the company all assembled safe, the other boats came in about an hour after.

It was a beautiful evening, and the Colonel before retiring to his quarters, took them to Hog-Island ; a small island lying just in the mouth of the harbor, leaving a narrow passage through on the north towards Paposquash point, and another towards Bristol ferry. It was a most sightly place,

and to have gone there in the day time, would infallibly have aroused suspicion ; but favored by the imperfect light of a fine, but star-light night, they escaped observation. On this isolated spot, which commanded a view of the adjacent islands, and a wide one of the bay, Colonel Barton for the first time designed to acquaint his soldiers with the object of their destination. His heart swelled high as he bade them remark the British shipping in the bay. They could see them distinctly, and their appearance was somewhat formidable ; all seemed hushed to profound repose on the opposite side, the north side of Rhode-Island, in full view of the British encampment. The curtains of the army tents were just moved by the soft breezes of a July evening ; the evening gun had long since been fired, and the reveille beat to quarters, and only the tread of the watchful sentinel as he slowly paced backwards and forwards before the doors of the tents, seemed to give notice that they were alive. Those hardy bands, that but one word, or one gun, would have immediately called into action and stimulated to deeds of rapine and bloodshed, now slept in peace, for that night at least.

Rude and unlettered as the most of that little band might be supposed to be, the effect of the scene was not lost upon them ; and when their commander proceeded to unfold his plan, and state the object for which their services were required, a ready response followed the avowal, and all at once professed their readiness to risk their lives in the attempt, and do the utmost in their power. They were surprised, astonished, at the boldness of the plan, but as much delighted as surprised ; and promised solemnly, not to give the least hint of it. They then returned to Bristol, and remained there until about nine o'clock the next evening, the 6th, when they re-embarked, and

passed over to Warwick neck. Colonel Barton, himself, proceeded to Warren, to take one more look of his family, who were then on a visit to his mother. Although he had been up all the night before on the water, his wife observed that he scarcely closed his eyes that night, and knowing by his restlessness that something lay heavy on his mind, as she expressed it, tried every art she was mistress of to come at it, but in vain. He had just communicated the secret to forty men, but nothing could prevail on him to disclose it to a woman, even the wife of his bosom; a most abominable want of gallantry, certainly, and for which he did not deserve to have a woman write his history. But as the christian maxim is, to return good for evil, we shall take our revenge by saying all the good we know about him, and give him full credit for the patriotic feeling and noble daring of which we sincerely believe him to have been capable.

Silent, cautious, and as before, with muffled oars, the little party once more embarked on their perilous enterprise, and after various evolutions to escape the cognisance of the enemy's ships, safely arrived on the opposite side of Narragansett Bay, at a place called Warwick Neck, from whence they designed to cross over to Rhode-Island. It was necessary, however, to lay there the next day, and during the course of it the wind changed to east northeast, and brought on a storm, which was the occasion of much delay, and they did not get away from there finally until the evening of the 9th, at about nine o'clock.

Before the departure of the boats from Warwick Neck, again the Colonel numbered them all, and appointed each his place. To every boat there was one commissioned officer, exclusive of Colonel Barton. The party consisted of forty-one men,



officers included, viz. five officers, forty-five privates, and a black servant of the Colonel, called Guy Watson, a faithful attendant and a shrewd fellow, and one who, in his own opinion at least, formed a very important personage in the expedition. We regret sincerely that the poor fellow is dead. His demise was of very recent occurrence, and he continued to regret to the day of his death, that his name had never appeared in any account of the transaction. After the capture of Prescott, Guy was made a drummer, and we will venture to say a prouder one never handled drum-sticks. He was remarkably small, and when attenuated by age, his appearance was the most grotesque that can be imagined. On all public days he usually made his appearance on the parade ground, dressed in complete uniform, and his appearance was a perfect holiday to all the little urchins about street, who would immediately crowd around, to listen to his stories, and hear him in his cracked voice sing the old Ballad, beginning "Brave Barton!"

Silently, reverently and attentively, the little band drew round their commander to receive his last orders. In a subdued voice the Colonel gave his orders. First, "that they were to preserve the strictest order;" secondly, "not to have the least idea of plunder;" thirdly, "to observe the most profound silence;" and fourthly, "to take no spiritous liquors whatever with them." He spoke a few words on the hazard attending it, and on his part pledged himself "to share every danger, whatever it might be, equally with his soldiers." A solemn pause succeeded for a moment. The deep conviction that there was after all, One above all, and over all, in whose hands are the destinies of nations and individuals, irresistibly forced itself upon the mind. The idea was overwhelming.



The Col. reverently uncovered his head, and looking up, most earnestly commended himself and those who were with him to the protection of Him who is the disposer of events. Each soldier respectfully raised his hat, then hastily replacing it, proceeded to take his station in the boat.

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## CHAPTER II.

PREVIOUS to the departure of the little company from Warwick Neck, the commander on that station had been directed to keep a sharp lookout, and if he should hear the report of three distinct muskets, to come to the north end of Prudence and take them off; for they had reasons to fear the British men-of-war might send their boats out and cut them off from the main. The force on Warwick Neck, though not very considerable in number, was (owing to their position) a very important one. The guns from their battery, had often protected both the outward and homeward bound vessels of the Americans in the bay. To run the back passage, was in general the most secure of danger from the enemy; and vessels chased, often took shelter along side, until prudence warranted their coming up the bay, and their force, small as it was, did on more occasions than one, protect the property and persons of the inhabitants of the adjacent islands of Canonicut and Prudence, as well

as the villages along the shore on the Narragansett side.

In the forward boat of the little company Colonel Barton posted himself, with a pole ten feet long, and a handkerchief tied to the end of it, so that his boat might be known from the others, and none might go before it. They had to steer between the islands of Prudence and Patience, in order that the enemy's shipping, which lay against Hope Island, might not discover them; they then rowed under the west side of Prudence, until they came to the southward; here they came very near encountering some of the enemy's ships, which now lay so near them that they distinctly heard the sentinal cry out, "All's well." However, by dint of manœuvering, they made out to elude observation, and got safely and unobserved to within about three quarters of a mile of Rhode-Island; here a new cause of alarm arose. They heard a noise on the island, like the running of horses. What could it be? Could it be the troops on the island apprised of their coming, and preparing to intercept them? They rested on their oars some minutes, but hearing nothing more, the Colonel concluded it was only the accidental running of horses as they often do when let loose, and gave the signal to go on.

Upon gaining the shore, they left a man to the care of each boat, charged to be ready for a push in case the enemy should endeavor to impede their retreat. The party were then marched in five divisions from the shore, which was just one mile from the house. Quite near the house there was a hill to rise, and through this, there was a deep gulley, worn by the rain washing away the dirt. Nothing could have been better contrived. Through this the soldiers silently and cautiously crept until they gained the top, and found them-

selves just by the house ; the entrance to which, was by three doors, south, east, and west. Three of the five divisions were to attack each a door ; the fourth, to guard the road ; the fifth, to act on emergencies, and as to Guy, the black, he kept close in the track of the Colonel. In passing to the house they left the guard-house on the left; and a little left of that was the Redwood house, where General Smith, second in command, was stationed. The house is now, 1838, the property of Christopher G. Champlin, Esq. On the right, or Newport side, was a building appropriated to a party of light-horse, who were quartered there for the purpose of carrying orders from General Prescott to any part of the island. There was also a sentinel stationed about twenty-five yards from the gate. No fears agitated the inhabitants within. Believing himself as secure as though snugly stowed away on his own fast-anchored isle, the haughty representative of British clemency and paternal affection, rested in imagined security ; around, within the sound of a whistle, lay his ample body guard ; a party of troops on the right, and the bay was lined with British ships.

What could he fear ? Besides, his host (a genuine tory, who afterwards accompanied him to England), was a host in himself ; his aid, Major Barrington, Mr. Overing's son, and the servants, constituted the household, or the male part of it, at least.

History gives no reason why these persons slept so well on this night, yet there was a reason. A rich prize had been brought into Newport the day before, of Wines and Santa Cruz, and as usual, a jolly carouse had been held in Newport at the house of one Bannister, a refugee tory, a person who left the island, with the principal part of His Majesty's friends, at the evacuation of the town.

On this occasion it was shrewdly suspected some of said puncheons were tapped, and notwithstanding the coffee that finished an English dinner, that the General and his friends, who were lucky after all to get to their quarters in safety, were sleeping at the rate of "ten knots an hour."

The sentinel, be that as it may, was sober, and we would not for the world be so vulgar as to say all were not; when they opened the gate of the front yard, he put the usual interrogation, "Who comes there?" They gave no answer, but continued advancing, there being a row of trees between them he could not so well distinguish their number; he was not therefore alarmed, but reiterated the question, when the Colonel answered "Friends." "Advance and give the countersign," responded the sentinel. "We have none, said General Barton, but have you seen any deserters to-night?" This of course had all been concerted as a decoy, and it had the effect, for the poor fellow never dreamed of treachery, until he found his arms pinned to his sides, as by a vice, his musket seized, and he was threatened with "instant death if he made the least noise." They asked him "if Prescott was within?" He was so much frightened he could not speak, at first, but at length waving his hand towards the house, he said "Yes." By this time, each division had got its station and the door was burst in; and they ascended first to a chamber above, where it chanced the worthy host himself lodged. He said the General was not there, appeared much frightened, and pointed with his finger to the apartment below. However, they did not believe him, but securing him, proceeded to the next chamber, where Mr. Overing's son lay, and not finding him, descended to the room below, which was fastened, but Guy, whose head was as hard as a cannon ball, made one plunge



and burst through, head first. Previous to this, on the head of the stairs, Colonel Barton called to his men and told them to set the house on fire, at the four corners, as he was determined to have General Prescott, either dead or alive; and Prescott aroused probably for the first time, called out "What is the matter?" Guided by this sound, they immediately descended to the room, and the Colonel, as he entered, saw a man sitting on the side of the bed; clapping him on the shoulder, the Colonel asked him "if he was General Prescott?" He answered "Yes, sir." The Colonel then told him he was his prisoner; he replied, "I acknowledge it, sir." The Colonel then telling him he must go with them, he begged the privilege of putting on his clothes; the Colonel told him, very few, for their business required haste, and in fact, such was the haste that they were under the necessity of hurrying the General away without his clothes, a misfortune that was very eloquently bewailed in those days, by those mischievous fellows, the poets. In the beginning of the assault upon the house, Maj. Barrington leaped out of his chamber window, and was immediately secured by the guard-soldiers of the Colonel below; him they took with the simple sentinel, in the midst of the party, and marched towards the shore. The sentinel, be it remembered, was the only one of the prisoners that had shoes on, and to expedite the travelling, General Prescott and his aid were compelled to hug their foes, and cling with each arm around a neck, while they were borne, or rather dragged, through the stubble. There being no particular obligation on the party to return by the way they came, they took the liberty to go back by the nearest path; and avoided the defile before mentioned, crossing a field of rye, with black berry and rasp-



berry bushes. In crossing this field or pasture, or hill side, or whatever it was, the poor General got a severe scratching, and as his tormentors would not slacken their speed, he was obliged to pursue his journey in a most uncomfortable manner. The leisurely and cautious pace, at which they crept on towards the house, was discarded now, and dashing on by the nearest route, they soon left house and pursuers, all far behind, and gained the boats in safety. Then seating the prisoners in number one, the Colonel put his own cloak over the shivering General, and pushed off. Somebody, however, had made out to break loose from the house and give information of the theft, for they had no sooner put from the shore than the signal of alarm was given, the firing of three cannon and three rockets. Nevertheless, the little party pursued its way in safety. General Prescott just asked if Colonel Barton commanded. Upon getting into the boats he was answered in the affirmative. "You have made a — bold push to-night," said he. He appeared much confused when taken, and when he found himself so near the British shipping, agitated and perplexed, he wisely forbore any vain attempts at escape or alarm; instead of which, however, he said *he hoped they would not hurt him*. "Oh no," said the Colonel, "you shall not be hurt, while under my care."

It was not one hour after Prescott was taken, before it was known all over the island; although it was in the middle of the night! The next day, about fifty British officers rode out to see the place; the trail was easily marked, owing to the tramping through the field of rye, and there having been a heavy dew that night, their whole course to the shore was traced. Mortified as the British were at the manner of the capture, officers and

privates were generally rejoiced to get rid of him; he was so arbitrary and tyrannical as to be universally hated. The signs of mourning for the loss of the old General were truly ludicrous; the very children on the island seemed joined in the conspiracy to insult the army, and continued to throw themselves in the way they were passing, putting their handkerchiefs to their eyes and making the most grotesque faces; many of the tories found their knockers tied with black crape, and the posts before their doors ornamented with black hatbands. In short, there was no way in which Yankee wit was not exercised to bring to continual remembrance the mortification they had sustained. All the way along the road and streets of the city, those roguish urchins were seen wherever any of the British were passing, to apply their handkerchiefs to their eyes, or in case of that destitution, their coat sleeves.

The place where these boats were moored was within a creek, and just under the shelter of a little sand bluff; from the right of the Overing house, as you approach it, there is a little brook, which crossing the road, descends the hill in rather a slanting direction towards the left, and running through a kind of gouge empties into the creek, just upon the right of where the boats were moored; on the right of this brook, as you approach the road from the shore, for about half a mile, the land suddenly rises in such a manner as in the dusk to throw a kind of shade over the gouge extremely favorable to the march of the company, who kept along under the shadow of the ridge as far as it went, and then emerged back of Peleg Coggshall's farm, keeping along a little more to the left of the brook, until they gained the road. The guard house on the left, was not more than forty or fifty rods from their course, and stood on the spot now

occupied by one belonging to the heirs of Moses Thurston. The house then belonging to the family of Overing is now the property of Captain Ambrose Page; and although it has been pretty much re-modeled and re-built since that period, it bears strong evidence of antiquity. The heavy cornices and arched mantel-pieces discovers the fashion of olden time, when every thing with the great was cumbrous magnificence.

Of all the company who figured on that memorable night in the capture, we are not aware that but two remains; Mr. Corey, now residing in Portsmouth, and Mr. Whitney of New York. Had they been sacrificed, the battle would have been a hot one, and Prescott would not have been *retaken, alive*. There was one among that company who would himself have despatched him; one stimulated by as deep a sense of injury as ever rankled in the human breast. This man, Thomas Austin, had been whipped three hundred lashes by the order of General Prescott, because he refused to yoke his team to carry a cannon across the island to defend themselves against the Americans, at the time of a false alarm. By the remonstance of the attending physicians, who protested he could not survive it, he was excused from receiving the whole compliment, and suffered to go home on parole and recover from his wounds. There he stayed only long enough to get something to eat, and decamped for the army, at Tiverton.

The adventurous little boats continued their way through the waves with most astonishing rapidity. The deep-mouthed cannon was echoing far and near; the beacon of alarm was blazing from a hundred different stations, and streaming rockets were illuminating the darkness of the night. The weary tread of the midnight watch on board the enemy's ships was exchanged for

bustling confusion ; while the boatswain's shrill whistle, the speaking trumpet and the roll of the drum were summoning all hands on deck, beneath the very stern of one vessel and the bowsprit of another, the hardy band of patriots pushed their way, favored by that intense darkness, which in this latitude invariably precedes day-dawn ; and just as that blessed season arrived, "when all the east was streaked with gold, mingled with the soft purple of advancing light," and rendering the splendid scenery of Narragansett Bay distinct to the eye ; just as each lovely island rose on the sight of the gazer like some fabled region of romance, the boats found themselves under the guns of the fort, and safe from their enemies.

The captive General cast a rueful eye around ; in vain for him the landscape smiled ; the black beams and roofless houses on Conanicut and Prudence ; the trampled fields, where no grain was likely to repay the tiller's toil ; the forsaken hearths, and banished and slaughtered inhabitants, were present to his mind ; a day of retribution might come, "what would he do with his enemy, in his power, as he was in that enemy's ?" What had he done with those unfortunate prisoners, whom the chances of war had thrown into his hands ? Prisoners, seized at their own firesides, or in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, with no arms in their hands. What had he done with the poor old man, whom his soldiers stabbed through and through, while pleading for his life ? What with the murdered Lee, the brave Captain John Lee, of Connecticut ? What with the wretched prisoners, now in the holds of the nauseous vessels in the harbor of Newport, starving, wasting away with hunger or fever, and hopeless confinement ; reviled, abused, derided, by his unfeeling soldiery ? Oh, conscience ! it is not possible, but



at such a moment, thou must have asserted thy rights, and given a foretaste of that punishment, which is hereafter, in an especial manner, to overwhelm the *unmerciful*.

But though humanity appeared banished from the breasts of the British commanders, equally with their soldiers, it was not from their magnanimous foes. General Barton was a man of great good nature and real humane feelings, and he had determined as far as in him lay, to return good for evil. He escorted his prisoner to comfortable quarters, and despatched a messenger to Warwick to get a chaise and to give orders for the best breakfast that could be procured, and an express to Major-General Spencer, at Providence, for a coach to conduct his prisoner hither ; and with the coach went spectators in abundance. Colonel Elliot came in it.

At the time so many distressed families were seeking to get away from Rhode-Island, some very considerable difficulty was experienced in procuring passports to get away. Mrs. Read, the person mentioned before in this story, was among the number, and finding all direct application useless, she at length applied herself. He at first refused, frankly avowing that he “meant to keep her there to catch her husband.” But at length some of the under officers, joining in the request, he relented, and ordered the passport made out. Upon presenting it, he said, in his usual pompous manner, “If you go to Providence, to get out of *my way*, Mrs. Read, you will lose your labor, as I shall get there about as soon as you will.”

Mrs. Read was now settled in a comfortable residence, a house on Weybosset-street belonging to Mr. Butler, (still standing, near the Arcade,) when on the morning of the 10th of July, Captain William Brown, a connexion of her family, called



to tell her that her old tormentor, Prescott, was coming past in the course of the day. "And now, Mary," said he, "if you will stand in the front door and welcome him as he passes, and say, why, General, you said you should be here, but I did not think you would come so soon; scarce as money is, I will give you fifty dollars." "It is a bargain," said the lady. Accordingly, when the carriage came past, she threw open the front door and presented her majestic figure. She was a woman of singular appearance, take her all in all, and very handsome; being somewhat above the common height, having a very piercing pair of black eyes, and when excited, there was something startling in her look. The General, though riding bareheaded in an open carriage, subject to the gaze of the multitude, endeavored to carry himself with composure, and from time to time would turn to make some remark to his captor, who sat by his side, strove in vain to retain his equanimity, when he observed Mrs. Read. Owing to the crowd which surrounded the carriage, it moved very slowly through the streets, and as she threw open the door, his eyes chanced to turn full upon her. He changed countenance, dropped his eyes instantly, and a transient flush passed over his features; and it was observed, that from that moment his composure vanished. As to the lady, though a woman of uncommon firmness and fearlessness, she was quite unmoved by this unlooked for agitation.

The loud huzzas that greeted his brave captor, had not yet ceased to ring in his ears, when Capt. Brown came in to see if she was entitled to her fifty dollars; and very much disappointed was he that he had not got to pay it.

A wonderful stir, meanwhile, was made on Rhode-Island, to hunt up the magnificent General

Prescott. They could not believe any one could have spirited him away from the island, so well guarded as the harbor was ; and they continued so search every suspected patriot's house, until a despatch arrived to assure them of the fact. Immediately after, a flag of truce was despatched up the river to Providence, to carry his wardrobe, his purse, a box of soap, powder, (not black, but white powder,) pomatum, and half a score of smelling bottles, containing Eue de Cologne, bergamot and lavender ; the dandy Lieutenant who had them in charge, insisted upon seeing "His Excellency," but this was positively denied him ; nor was he suffered to come farther up the river than Field's Point. Even here, he was detected in taking a draft of the harbor, &c. and came very near not seeing Newport again that day.

Colonel Barton had made his wife promise to meet him in Providence on this day, (10th,) but she could not believe he would be there, and did not set out ; but went out to visit a friend residing in the upper part of the village of Warren. During the afternoon, a straggler came past and told the news, which nobody believed, least of all, his wife ; because he had not told her he was going there. However, before night her husband came himself for her and returned with her immediately to Providence.

General Prescott was conveyed the third day after his capture, to Connecticut, in order to be exchanged for General Lee, who was then kept on board the Centurion man-of-war, lying off the capes of Virginia. Prescott was forwarded to New-York, taken possession of by the British to be exchanged ; but with their accustomed subtlety, they still detained General Lee ; continuing to ply him with offers to desert his country and engage in their service, and the General could not

get released until nearly a year after. Various conclusions have been formed respecting General Lee, and frequent doubts expressed of his honesty by writers of that day, and subsequently. If the writer may at this distant day be allowed to express an opinion, she would say that imprudent and ill judged, and even perverse, as some of the subsequent actions of General Lee's life were, there does not appear to be any thing to support the assertion that the enemy succeeded then, if ever, in corrupting him, and the opinion is grounded upon the following facts. First, he was detained by them in inactivity a very long time, when if he had been bought, he might, by being released, have been doing them very essential service. Secondly, he himself made known their offers, and sent on to government a letter written to him, with offers from some of his tory friends, and made no secret of the snares laid for his honesty. Thirdly, he was vilified in the despatches sent over to England, and in the English papers was accused of being a drunkard, and was there represented as "killing himself by the use of the brandy bottle;" and we must confess if he was a traitor under these circumstances, it was a policy beyond our understanding. General Lee, it is true, was much better treated than almost any prisoner that fell into their hands, for their cruelty to those prisoners who fell into their hands, whether taken in battle or from merchant vessels on the high seas, or stolen from off the land, was beyond any thing we have known any thing of in modern times, except that of the Turks towards the unfortunate Greeks, and the abuse of the wretched Poles, by the barbarous Russians. With the single exception of selling their white prisoners into slavery their treatment was quite

as bad. And as to the blacks, they lured many of them into their service, from the southern states, and after the war they retained them as slaves or sold them to the West-India planters.

But Lee was a General, and the only one that had been taken during the war. His rank, together with the hope of corrupting him, procured his good treatment.

The question is often asked at this day, "Why reiterate those abuses?" "Why keep alive a spirit of resentment against those who are no longer our enemies?" We answer, in the first place, it is unavoidable ; it is so interwoven with our history, that without it it would be a mere skeleton of a history. And next, let us never lose sight of the price, the tremendous price that our country has paid for her freedom. Let the rising generation know it, and learn to cherish what has cost so dear, and learn too to beware of the encroachments of despotic governments.

Our fathers perished by hundreds in dungeons, on board their prison-ships, and elsewhere, rather than wear the badge of slavery. They were tried, afflicted, tormented, and they refused to accept of food, clothing and liberty upon condition of enlisting in the British service. Six hundred of them, in one year, perished in confinement at Halifax, rather than purchase life at so great a cost. But time would fail us to recapitulate all their sufferings ; and we are not writing a history of the war, but of an individual, and as far as his history was connected with the events of the war, we feel ourselves compelled to detail them.

Here we are obliged to go back to mention a circumstance which had much influence on the mind of Colonel Barton, as well as on those of others ; and that was the wretched situation of the prisoners at Newport at that time. Every op-



portunity that could be seized was improved by those unfortunate persons to send word to Providence of their situation. At one time seven hundred of them were shut up in a meeting-house in Newport, where they pulled down the pews, and commenced building a chimney. They afterwards abandoned the plan. The greater part were conveyed to prison-ships lying in the harbor.

Among other things a letter was published in the month of February, from the General Hospital Surgeon, which excited the deepest indignation in the people of Providence. It was addressed to Mr. Carter, publisher of the Providence Gazette, accompanied by a request from the writer that it might be printed. The letter was as follows :

“ February 22. Died in the General Hospital of this town, Captain John Lee, late a prisoner to British cruelty, who a few days before arrived here from Newport, with a number more who were exchanged. He informed me he was born in New-London, Con. and formerly sailed master of a vessel from Georgia. He has left in the hospital a trunk, watch, &c. As he made no will, nor gave any directions respecting the above things, I thought it my duty to make known to the public, that his relations (if any) might be made acquainted with his fate, and upon application to the Steward of the Hospital, receive the above articles.

Captain Lee was one out of seven of the above mentioned prisoners brought to this Hospital, in the most deplorable situation. The condition they were in when brought here was enough to excite the commiseration of the most barbarous savages in the universe, except those of Great Britain. Whoever could behold such spectacles of misery without emotion, must be callous to every feeling



of humanity. The whole of their clothing, when they arrived here (Captain Lee's excepted) was not worth a dollar. They were overrun with vermin, half rotten with the scurvy and putrid fever ; some of their extremities were frozen, and rotting through neglect ; in fine, their condition was wretched beyond description. A large number of them were confined promiscuously in the hold of a vessel—officers, privates, negroes, &c.—where they were half starved, and denied even light for a number of days, and to complete their miseries, they did not fail to receive the kicks and scoffs of the soldiers, when opportunity offered, who upbraided them with the epithet of “damned yankee rebels.”

This is the treatment, free born Americans suffer, who have the misfortune to fall into the hands of Britons, a nation formerly not less celebrated for humanity than for bravery ; but, alas ! how does such conduct demonstrate them to be lost to all sense of it.

ISAAC SENTER,  
*Hospital Surgeon.”*

A cartel was immediately despatched, in order to bring away those unfortunate people. There were but few, however, for whom an exchange could be expected. Many died in their hands ; some were sent to Halifax, some to England, and some impressed and sent to the East-Indies, to fight against Hyder Ali. Persons returned to this State, after the war, that had been thus disposed of. Nothing, it is believed, tended to exasperate the minds of the people equal to the bad treatment of prisoners of war.

General Smith succeeded General Prescott, as General pro tem., until the arrival of Gen. Pageot from New-York ; but no amendment as respected the treatment of prisoners took place, until the na-

tions of Europe extended their hand to support the abused Americans ; then fear operated to produce what a sense of duty and humanity failed of effecting.

Meanwhile the predatory excursions of the English in the neighborhood of Narragansett Bay continued, much to the alarm of the good people of Providence. There were then three ships lying in Providence harbor. One was the old Columbus, the other two were the Providence and the Warren. Various plans were contrived, without effect, by the British, to burn them, which caused frequent alarms by their coming so far up the river. The difficulties of the channel, however, prevented their venturing ; nevertheless, it was no small evil to be roused as they were, oftentimes in the night, by the firing of cannon, and have to get up and make preparation for a removal to the country. General Barton, among others, secured a tenement in a farm-house about ten miles out, where he carried his wife and children, before he returned to the encampment.

On the 27th, Congress voted him an elegant sword, in acknowledgment of his capture of Gen. Prescott, and sent him a vote of thanks for that important service. Important it was on many accounts. It had a tendency to excite in a high degree, the enthusiasm of the people to convince them that their foes in this quarter were not invincible, and to humble the arrogance of our neighbors at Newport.

After his return to Tiverton, Colonel Barton could not be satisfied to sit down in inglorious inactivity, and some more deserters who shortly came to his camp, communicated intelligence that persuaded him to undertake one more exploit of bravery. He discovered that the treasure of the

British, their funds, &c., was kept in a house in Newport, on the main street in the southerly part of the town, called the Malbone house, (which is now standing,) and that it was very carelessly guarded.

To have surprised one of their ships, or opened one of their dungeons and set the prisoners free, would have been impossible ; but to effect the seizure of this treasure he believed practicable, and with the same company, he resolved to attempt it. He communicated his plan to them ; it was enthusiastically received, and the means of effecting it immediately concerted.

The plot was this ; to start from the same point as before, and land below the town of Newport, just by where the new Fort Independence is now building, and to scatter from that point and all meet at such an hour appointed, at the back part of the Malbone house, which they conceived would be least guarded, rush into the house, secure the sentinels first, the inhabitants next, and then each man fill his sack ; for which purpose they had, each man, a sack provided, made of strong cloth. They were then to escape with it to the boat, before the military could be called out.

Just as every thing was ready, they ascertained by their spies on the island, that the treasure was suddenly moved to the British encampment, and of course guarded by the troops. It is believed by persons now living, to whom General Barton communicated the particulars of his plan, that they would have succeeded if the enemy had not taken the wise policy of removing it to a place of safety. However, it was entirely frustrated by this movement.

By what means they were informed in what part of the house the treasure was concealed, (if they were informed,) is not now known. The

house where the treasure was then kept—for they several times removed it—was in the three story brick house on South Main-street, or Thames-street, as it is sometimes called, formerly belonging to Francis Malbone, Esq. Mr. Malbone was not a tory. If he had been perhaps his house might not have been used to quarter soldiers in. But two of his daughters married British officers. One of them married Earl Stanhope, who was then an officer on board one of the British ships, and whose bust it is said still occupies a place over one of the mantle pieces in that house. A late painter, in repairing this house, supposing it to be the bust of General Washington, very unceremoniously daubed it with an American uniform. We had the curiosity as a matter of speculation to go over the old house the other day, and were very politely aided by the present tenants, a family from New-York, in the examination; and we must say we think it singularly and happily constructed for such a purpose, viz. the concealment of treasure. The numerous closets, store-rooms, and cupboards, from the garret to the cellar, might almost hide an army. The cellars, particularly, seem as though built for that object, otherwise it is difficult to conceive what some of those curious depositories could have been meant for. We observed that although the broad hall or entry which extends quite through each story, and has a spacious staircase up one flight, has none connecting the two upper ones, but only a little winding stair from a very dark entry, opening into the great one, and we should think would puzzle a philosopher to find in the night; so that if the treasure had chanced to be in the third story, there would have been time one would think to muster the whole British army, before it could have been removed. Nevertheless, through means



of spies it might have been known exactly where it was. And besides, Yankees are marvellously *cute* (as one of them observed) about ferreting out such things.

There is an anecdote connected with the history of Earl Stanhope, whose bust figures here, and who was said to be an inferior looking person, that deserves to be recorded. He was in one of the ships in the squadron of Wallace which lay off the harbor of Newport at the commencement of the war, and the suspicion of the inhabitants had been excited that certain persons from that squadron were concerned in the riots which almost nightly occurred on the Point, in a cluster of delapidated buildings inhabited by some of the most dissolute outcasts of society.

Several of the neighbors, seconded by the civil authority, at length agreed to watch, in order to secure the persons of their visitors if possible. It was not long before the veritable Lord Stanhope was taken and put in close custody. Upon discovering the rank of their prisoner, they immediately conveyed him to a distance, and for some time he was a prisoner in one of the northern towns of the State, from which place he contrived to run away, and taking his course in a southeasterly direction. He at length brought up at Swanzey, from which place he one day employed a man to take him down the river in a boat, and after getting round into the bay, compelled him to carry him to one of the British ships. The man, who had no disposition to obey, yet from momentary fear of a pistol ball through his head, concluded to carry him, upon the promise of not being made a prisoner of war. True to his word, which was rare honor in those days towards a rebel, Stanhope not only suffered him to return, but gave him his purse on parting. He was afterwards at-



tached to the fleet that brought Prescott and his forces to Newport, and was the person who conveyed the intelligence of the arrival of the French fleet, to General Clinton at New-York. The town was so closely watched it was not thought possible by the British to convey the intelligence out of the harbor. But Stanhope hired one Joseph Durfee to take him on in a small boat, and they arrived safely at New-York, and gave the first notice. For this act he was subsequently rewarded by having the command of a ship. It was said to be the only enterprise he ever attempted.

### CHAPTER III.

IN the course of the winter, General Barton received his commission of Brevet Colonel from Congress, and that removed him from a situation where he had been most singularly useful in more respects than one, and not the least perhaps in succoring the distressed inhabitants of Newport.

Numerous families arrived in Providence during this winter, in a state of the most lamentable destitution, and a regular subscription was got up every week in Providence, and in the neighboring States, for their relief. One hundred barrels of beef from the farmers in Connecticut arrived, and meal, potatoes, and other articles continued to arrive, and clothing in abundance, and yet it appeared as if many did actually suffer, notwithstanding all this charity.

Upon receiving his commission in the United States army, Colonel Barton left the fort as we observed, and returned to Providence. The army being provided with officers, he was not immediately needed in actual service, therefore he had an opportunity to see to the affairs of his family. He hastened to remove his wife and children to Providence again, where, for the winter, at least, they felt secure, as the harbor was generally frozen over during most of that season.

The new commission made no difference in the views of Colonel Barton, as it respected his employment. He went immediately to work in his hatter's shop, and devoted all the time that could be spared from the increasing cares of his family, to his occupation, awaiting, though, with some interest, the moment when he might again be remanded to serve his country.

1778. Deserters from the British camp at Newport, continued to arrive almost daily. Money had been forwarded from England to pay off their soldiers, and the Hessians who came up and surrendered themselves to the Americans, stated that great dissatisfaction existed in their corps on account of their demands; that an immense remittance had just arrived, and the officers, after helping themselves and taking what they thought fit for service money, paid them only *five coppers* each soldier, to whom two or three years' arrearages were due. They said there were more than one hundred who knew of their intention to escape, and who were ready to follow them the first opportunity.

On the 24th of June, two gentlemen, officers on board the Lark frigate, made their escape, by going ashore at Newport and purchasing a boat to take a sail. Thomas Gates was acting Lieutenant, and Doctor Henry Stephens, Surgeon. They

were both gentlemen of the highest respectability, who had been in his Majesty's service some years, but had become so wearied and disgusted with the cruelties practised by the British recently, that they resolved to abandon them for ever. Of course, they were received with open arms by the people of Providence. Dr. Stephens immediately entered the army as surgeon and physician. The hospital at Providence was then in the College, where Dr. Stephens took up his abode. His gentlemanly deportment, humanity, and critical knowledge of his profession, is still distinctly remembered by some of the oldest inhabitants of Providence. Of the fortunes of Lieutenant Gates, we are ignorant.

On the 9th, the cowardly attack upon Fall River was made, which ended only with bringing off one prisoner, Richard Borden, and the loss of several little bridges, which the Americans who were there destroyed themselves, to prevent their getting to the mill. They burnt the house of Thomas Borden, and then retreated precipitately to the boats, leaving one man of their party dead on the ground, and another wounded who died next day, and losing two more, who were killed in repassing Bristol ferry, by a chain shot, from the American fort on the north side. Enraged at the little success they had met with in this quarter, and at being repulsed by a little handful of the inhabitants, for they had no soldiers in the place nor nearer than the fort at Tiverton, (and they were awakened to defend themselves in the dead of the night,) the British at Newport resolved to go better prepared next time, and if possible to wipe off the disgrace of being repulsed and beaten off by three or four old men and a company of boys, and the whole only twenty-five, were the defenders of Fall River. Accordingly they fitted out a

company of six hundred men, commanded by suitable officers, and despatched them to the east side of Narragansett Bay, in the night of the 27th, just eighteen days after the attack upon Fall River.

Although the destruction of the shipping at Kickemuit was a great object, it appears there was a pique of some standing against the port of Bristol. The British at Newport, had been for some time so much exasperated against them, that they refused to receive any communications through that source in the exchange of prisoners; they had to be sent some round-about way, as no flag from Bristol was received. The reason given by Lord Percy respecting the insolence of Mr. West and General Varnum, is not very clear. The following letter found among the papers of Governor Bradford, and written some months before, merely proves the fact, but does not explain the nature of the offence.

“NEWPORT, April 8th, 1777.

SIR—I received your letter of the 6th, by the flag of truce which brought Mrs. Paine from Bristol, and should have sent you immediately an answer to the same place had not the unprovoked impertinence of Messrs. West and Varnum obliged me to put a total stop to all flags of truce coming from Bristol or Tiverton. I have therefore been under the necessity of sending this to Uptide's, Newtown, as well as Mrs. Stacy and her children, and shall send the other ladies you mention in your letter, as soon as they come to this island, for be assured, sir, it will give me pleasure to oblige you personally, from whom I have always received that attention and civility which persons who are really gentlemen will ever show each other.

You will please to direct that the ladies be sent from any place except Bristol or Tiverton; for



whilst Mr. West and Mr. Varnum remain there, I shall permit no communication with either of the above places. This, sir, you must be sensible can be no inconvenience to me, or the troops under my command, as we have neither relations, friends or acquaintance on the continent. How far it may be to the inhabitants, who may perhaps wish to hear sometimes from their friends, I cannot tell ; but if it is they must thank those whose conduct has occasioned it. Be assured, sir, no person wishes more than myself to alleviate the miseries of war as far as possible, and I am really sorry at being thus prevented from granting those little indulgences which are generally allowable during such a period.

Any request, sir, you are pleased to make me, which it is in my power to grant, I shall always with pleasure attend to, and am,

Sir, your humble servt.

PERCY.

P. S.—Since writing the above, I have seen Mrs. Stacy, who informs me she cannot leave this place before Monday next.

WILLIAM BRADFORD, Esq. &c. &c. &c."

This letter, addressed to William Bradford, Esq. and speaking of Mr. West and Mr. Varnum, instead of designating them by the title of the office they held in the State and the army, was written just three months before the capture of Prescott, and it is not to be supposed the enemy were more conciliated by that event, although the burning of Bristol, with the destruction of the boats at Kickemuit, did not occur until the following May.

On the morning of the 28th, about break of day, the 600 men embarked on this undertaking, landed about a mile above the entrance to the harbor,



on the west side of Popasquash. They proceeded in an oblique direction until they gained the great road, about a mile and a half above the port of Bristol. Here they separated, one party taking the road to Warren, and the other going over to Kickemuit.

The port of Bristol was the next object of their vengeance. The terrified inhabitants were obliged to see their dwellings in flames, and to find themselves surrounded by a force they had no means of withstanding. On that dreadful night, eighteen of the handsomest dwelling-houses were destroyed, one of which was Governor Bradford's, the Deputy-Governor of Rhode-Island, also the Episcopal Church, and Congregational meeting-house. The inhabitants were plundered of every thing valuable they could lay hands on. The females even had their clothes taken, all that were deemed of sufficient value to carry away, and their rings forced from their fingers. Even the colored women were commanded to deliver up theirs, mostly brass. So grasping were these robbers, that the papers of that day state that they carried away a cargo of brass ornaments, plundered from the servants of the different families. The sick were hastily removed from the place, and one or two were carried off with other prisoners.

It was subsequently ascertained that the devastation of Bristol might have been prevented by one field piece planted on the bridge at the north entrance of the village, as the orders of the British were to avoid the entrance, if it was defended. The words were, "if any defence was attempted," and re-embark at Popasquash. They had no field pieces with them, and but a handful of men, therefore, might have defended the bridge.

Nothing could surpass the consternation of Bristol when surprised by the entrance of the British.

Whether they did not expect their return at all, or whether they expected them to re-embark at Popasquash, is not now known, but they seemed to be taken by surprise, and women and children were flying in all directions. Near the centre of the village there was a large house, owned by a Mrs. Usher, a tory lady, who invited the terrified females to take shelter under her roof. As "she was known to be their friend," she said, "she should not be harmed." Many of the ladies crowded into her habitation, but when they saw it pillaged, their terror was redoubled. It was in vain that the mistress of the mansion welcomed the enemy, and assured them of her reliance on their honor. They pillaged it of every thing valuable, and held a bayonet to her breast, while they compelled her to deliver up every ornament about her person, and then set fire to her house over her head.

Whether the old lady retained her loyalty after such a want of gallantry, we have not been able to ascertain. Those of the males who had remained to protect their families, were seized as prisoners, and dragged off to the prison ships.

Upon the first alarm, a despatch was sent off to Providence to General Sullivan, who was then there with his regiment, and likewise to Colonel Barton. It was about eight o'clock in the morning when they got the intelligence. Colonel Barton flew to the quarters of General Sullivan, and prepared to go on ahead with a few horsemen, to arouse the inhabitants along the road, and, if possible, make a sortie before the arrival of General Sullivan. This proposal was instantly seconded and cheerfully acceded to by General Sullivan, and accompanied only by a few horsemen, Colonel Barton mounted his horse and galloped on towards Warren.

Meanwhile the party of English and refugees proceeded to a place called Kickemuit, a place where there is a fine sheltered cove, with water of sufficient depth, and other conveniences for ship building. Here there were a number of flat bottomed boats building, and a large galley hauled up to repair. The boats they succeeded in destroying, but the galley was rescued.

From thence they proceeded to Warren, burning a windmill on their way, and plundering and destroying at every step.

The loyal inhabitants of Barrington, and other places on the road between Providence and Warren, eagerly joined the Colonel, and by the time he reached the town, he had collected quite a little force. The affrighted inhabitants of Warren were flying in every direction, and the columns of black smoke rising from their beautiful village, attested that their fears were not without foundation. The enemy were then in possession of Warren—Warren, the birth place of the General, the spot endeared to memory by all the most interesting associations. Hastily putting spurs to his horse, he outstript the speed of his followers, and arrived considerably in advance of them. The first of the enemy he discovered, was a miscreant with a firebrand in his hand, in the act of setting fire to the meeting-house. He sat up a tremendous hallo, and the fellow dropped it and fled. His men came up, and the enemy, hearing that a very large army was in their rear, commenced their retreat.

A very curious anecdote is related of General Barton here, and as it is quite characteristic, no one that knew him will doubt it. The reader must excuse us for sometimes calling him Colonel, and then General. He was General of the Rhode-Island militia, and Colonel in the United

States service, or Brevet Colonel. Of course either title belonged to him.

At the retreat of the British from Warren, the commanding officer in the expedition fell in with the hindmost, in order to conduct the retreat with as much decency as possible, and Colonel Barton hailed him, calling him a coward, and daring him to come out and fight him in single combat. "Come back, you d—d coward!" vociferated the Colonel. "I am the man who took Prescott, and by —, if you will just step out of your lurking place, I'll hack you to pieces in less time than it took to take him." The story is too well authenticated to admit of a doubt, and it has been confirmed by his own lips. The injury done to Warren was trifling in comparison to the injuries inflicted on Bristol. In fact, the inhabitants being apprized of their danger, had a chance to remove most of their valuable effects. Some few dwelling-houses were burned, one meeting-house, and some stores and out-buildings, together with a wind-mill, and some booty was carried away.

All the way down an incessant firing was kept up on both sides, and although they could not tell how many were wounded, yet the blood in the road gave evidence that there must have been a considerable number. The little force of Colonel Barton continued to harass their rear, and the enemy's shot was continually flying around them, yet they escaped almost miraculously, until just down by Popasquash. Popasquash Point is a small peninsula, extending directly in front of the harbor of Bristol. It contains probably about 200 acres, and is laid out in beautiful farms, and is connected with Bristol by a causeway or neck of land extending across the north end of the harbor.

The papers of that day state that the enemy

were taken off Bristol ferry, and other accounts say off Popasquash Point, which is erroneous. It is certain they made a halt just here, and Colonel Barton observing one of his company seemed to falter, struggling with all his might to get forward and make one onset, Barton, who observed it, raised himself in his stirrups, and looking round, shook his sword at him with a menacing air. Just at that moment a bullet from the enemy entered his right thigh, just above the knee, and glancing upwards lodged in the right hip. The Colonel never communicated the disaster, until the army were fairly out of the village of Bristol. He kept his seat until then, although the world swam before his eyes, and the first thing he said when he communicated it, was to thank the person, whose cowardly movement he said had saved his life, as, if he had been in the saddle, the bullet must have entered his vitals.

Captain Westcott was on Popasquash Point, and himself and nine privates were secured by the British, and carried off prisoners in their boats. Unfortunately General Sullivan did not arrive with his forces, time enough to cut off their retreat.

The particulars of this skirmish, were related by one Nathaniel Elliot, a native of Woodstock, Con., who was an eye and an ear witness of the whole, and had himself a part in the contest.

Lieutenant Elliot, lived to the age of ninety two, and enjoyed a pension under government ; he had received, I think, some wounds in the service. His death is of recent occurrence ; and took place in Providence, where he spent the last few years of his life with his descendants. He had a wonderful memory, and having served the whole seven year's war, was a living chronicle of the olden times.



Colonel Barton was carried to a neighboring house, where the bullet was extracted by Doctor Winslow and Governor Bradford ; and as soon as practicable, he was brought in a litter to Providence. The bullet taken from the side of the Colonel, is still preserved in his family, and was handed to the author by the feeble hands of her, the partner of his bosom, who once, in the prime of youth and pride of beauty, buckled the sword hilt to his waist.

A long and tedious illness was the consequence of this wound. For three months the Colonel kept his bed. A lingering fever, occasioned by his sufferings, set in, and for some time his life was in imminent danger. During his confinement, another son, called Daniel, was born to him.

Encouraged, probably, by the marauding expedition against Bristol and Warren, the enemy shortly after made another feint of coming up the river ; and the terrified inhabitants were roused at midnight by the firing, to leave their beds and prepare for flight. The family of General Barton were in no condition for a removal ; but Mrs. Barton was summoned upon the first alarm, to go down to her husband. Colonel Talbot, a most estimable officer in the army, was then watching with him. His wife found him, for the first time since his illness, sitting up in his bed. He was storming and raging in great agitation, that he could not go out to fight the enemy. The idea of leaving him in his present situation, was not to be borne ; and to stay with her terrified children, and risk to herself the horrors of a battle, should the British succeed in getting up ; or to be shut up in a town bombarded by the enemy, was equally repugnant to her feelings. But her mind was happily relieved by a message from General Sullivan, which just then arrived, telling them, “not to

think of removing unless there was real danger, in which case, they should have the earlist information respecting the means ; as he would immediately send a continental wagon to carry them safely ; that let what would be, they should be cared for first." The firing did not come near enough to injure the town, and after harassing the inhabitants as long as it would be safe, the shipping of the enemy moved down the river again. The alarm had no other effect that time, than to put every cart, truck, and conveyance of every sort, in requisition, and causing a great deal of property to be transported into the country.

In what manner the affair of the capture of Prescott was narrated in the English papers, or in those published in New-York by the tories and refugees, is not now known, but if it came as near the truth as their description of the battle of Bunker Hill, and the other transactions of the war, it must have been at least, an amusing story. It is scarce credible at this day, that the English government could have been deceived by the reports which their papers of that day asserted were made of battles fought in America, in which they always came off conquerors, of prisoners taken, (and always treated them with the greatest humanity,) of daily and immense accessions of strength, from the disaffected inhabitants of the States, and all the other ingenious lies, devised to blind the public mind to their defeats and disgrace, and inhumanities.

Papers were weekly published in New-York, detailing the accounts pretended to be received officially, of the immense forces coming over in the spring, or autumn, or whatever the approaching season chanced to be. It is confidently believed by many, that if all the forces they boasted from time to time were coming over, were added to-

gether, their numbers would have exceeded the whole population of England, Scotland and Ireland. One of their reports in an English paper published in London, in detailing the affair of Bunker Hill, boasted of slaying more of the Americans than were actually engaged in the contest, by several hundred, and taking prisoners beside to the number of 25,000, among whom, they said, were Putnam and Lee.

One very favorite topic at that time, was the dissensions in Congress, which they frequently asserted had arisen to such a height, that they almost daily received letters from the members, asking them if it would be possible, on their recantation, for the government of Great-Britain to receive them as loyal subjects. Sometimes they would state their names, just to excite disaffection, or sew the seeds of jealousy. At one time they put out handbills from New-York, and circulated them through the British camp, probably to reassure their soldiers, that General Washington had suddenly died, at such a place; telling the disease he died with, and enumerating the circumstances of his death. One very singular circumstance about this was, that they mentioned the very same disease the General actually died of, many years after, viz. the quinsy. Whether they had the spirit of prophesy, we cannot say. In derision of the plan of American Independence, they undertook in one of their papers to give a description of the United States, in the year 1840, purporting to be a *Boston* paper of that date, and though in derision, it is certainly, with very few exceptions, a most complete and just representation of what the country is now. We have once seen this curious publication, and with the exception of the king and titled gentry, we should say it comes very near the truth, and verifies the say-

ing of "many true words spoken in jest." The splendor of our cities, the great number of our literary and public institutions of every description, the large assemblage of foreign ambassadors, the great influx of foreigners of distinction continually flocking into the country, the vast settlements of the west, the wealth and resources of the country, and her friendship courted by every nation, though all described in the most bombastic and hyperbolical style, was nevertheless true to the life, and has more than been realized in every particular save one, that of the settlements, which they describe as extending *to the Northwest Coast*.

Every few days their papers would state, that two or three members of our Congress had *ran away*, and come to their camp to seek shelter from the vengeance of the rebels. Our revered Chief, they uniformly designated in all their communications, official or otherwise, as "Mister Washington." Doctor Franklin, they stated, while he was at the French court, "had denounced all ideas of our succeeding in the Utopian scheme of independence, and regretted exceedingly he had ever supposed it possible," &c. In fine, there were no end to their falsehoods. The tories in our cities and towns, conveyed all papers calculated to sow the seeds of suspicion and disaffection in our ranks, privately to the American camp and elsewhere, and in fact the arch deciever of mankind was never more fully employed than during that season.

The Americans were accused in their reports to their government of exercising cruelty towards their prisoners, and their own humanity loudly insisted on. The utter falsehood of this, they must have known, as now and then some one of their own officers, disgusted with their cruelty, would apprise the government of what was going on.



Letters were sent repeatedly by officers in the American army to those in the British, complaining of the multiplied barbarities, and inordinate cruelty of their soldiers and under officers, but it produced no effect except as they would occasionally hear that said offenders were advanced in the army. But we are digressing, and must hasten back to the State of Rhode-Island, and most fervently do we wish, that it were in our power to give in detail a history of all the skirmishes and manœuvres, carried on in Narragansett bay alone, for although it would fill a volume of itself alone, yet would the pleasure of the perusal fully recompense the trouble of it. Perhaps there was nothing so much annoyed the enemy in Rhode-Island at this period, as the constant ingress and egress of the privateers from Providence, Bristol, Warren, Greenwich, Wickford, and even from the little village of Pawtuxet, through Narragansett bay. In vain was the harbor of Newport reconnoitred by their shipping, with the greater part of the bay itself ; in vain was every port north of Newport declared in a state of strict blockade, in vain did they drive the peaceable inhabitants of Conanicut and the neighboring islands from their habitations by fire and sword, and establish an armed force there. Do what they would, the *villanous* privateers, and their subtle commanders, would find their way through in safety, and prize after prize continued to come up the river triumphantly, even under the very guns of their forts, and within hail of their ships.

As we were then so very destitute of ships of war, the principal annoyance of the enemy on our coast, was from privateers, and of these it would be highly interesting to give some little history of those belonging to our State alone, but they were so very numerous it would be impossible within

the limits of this work, and among so many brave and successful ones, almost invidious to name a few ; yet Rhode-Island will long remember the names of Hopkins, Whipple, Chace, Cahoone, Arnold, Read, Greene, Allen, Grimes, Pearce, Gardner, Dennis, Gadney, Simmons, Stacy, Bentley, Jeffers, Coggeshall, Finch, Jaques, Phillips, Burroughs, Murphy, Freeborn, Ladd, Sheffield, and Gazee, together with that renowned commander, John Paul Jones, who figured alternately in privateers and ships of war, and whose deeds of enterprise and daring appear almost beyond belief, so that many have considered the history of his life as a romance from beginning to end. Nevertheless, nothing is better authenticated than the history of his adventurous life.

It was a source of great regret to Colonel Barton, that the effect of his wound and long illness prevented active duty on the following year. He was not able to join the expedition of General Sullivan to Rhode-Island, when he went with the understanding of a co-operation with the Count D'Estaing. But though not in active military duty at that time, the Colonel was appointed to sundry offices of honor and profit. He was a member of the Legislature from Providence, and received from the general government the office of inspector in the custom-house, which office he continued to hold during his residence in Providence ; and it has since been continued in his family. An anecdote is related of him while a member of the House of Representatives, of a very amusing character. It was shortly after the evacuation of Newport by the British, and while the Assembly was convened at Bristol. The French and Americans were then very busy in fortifying the harbor of Newport, when the House was disturbed by an alarm gun from Newport. The whole two houses

rose, of course, and every thing was immediately in the greatest confusion. The *telegraph* announced the want of men only. A large public building was at that time under way at Bristol, and many of the ruined buildings going up again. Of course Bristol was unusually full of artizans, as well as of persons who had business before the House. General Cornell, who had taken the command of the military force at Providence, immediately after the departure of General Sullivan, who was summoned upon a distant service, was then in Bristol, by direction of the Legislature. A body of men was collected on the spot and sent to the rescue. Most of them, 150 or 200 in number, were volunteers. The carpenters and masons to a man, it was said, laid down their tools and shouldered their muskets. There were four large whale boats lying there able to carry 100 men, and they were soon filled. General Cornell went in the foremost one, Colonel Barton volunteered to go in the next, Colonel Christopher Olney was appointed to command the third, and the author has forgotten the name of the fourth. A Captain Ebenezer Sprague, of Johnston, wished much to go in the fourth, being very anxious, as he said, to see a *fight*. He stated that he had been called to several posts of danger, with the expectation of seeing a battle, but had always been disappointed. He had once been to Block-Island to bring off some property, when Newport was taken, and to his great disappointment just escaped encountering the enemy's forces ; and had once been out to assist a Captain Arnold, of Pawtuxet, who had got hemmed in between two British transports in Narragansett bay ; but the enemy instead of giving battle, he affirmed, ran away, and he was disappointed once more. Whether it was the hu-

mor of the man, or from whatever impulse, as Sprague affirmed, Colonel Barton had seen battle and he had not, the Colonel gave up his boat to Captain Sprague, and the four boats pushed off in the direction of Newport.

The men, it appeared, were wanted to go off to the relief of a privateer shewing American colors, who was then manœuvering to get into the harbor of Newport, and was intercepted by a British armed brig of very superior force. She had been pursued almost into the harbor by one of about equal size, and had turned about and given her battle and succeeded in capturing her after a severe engagement, in which the privateer, although she had completely crippled her antagonist, had sustained very considerable damage herself, and lost several men and a large number wounded on board. In this situation she encountered the brig of twice her force, which had been reconnoitering without the harbor of Newport for several days, on the lookout for her. Nothing was left for the American Captain, but to elude her, and pass into the harbor of Newport, if possible. For six hours the gallant Captain had managed to keep his foe at bay, not being willing to be taken alive, just within sight of his own townsmen, hundreds of whom lined the shore and covered the hills with spy-glasses, anxious spectators of the scene. The bells were ringing in Newport, and guns constantly firing from the forts ; but they could not be brought to bear upon the enemy. Loud shouts rent the air when the Bristol force appeared coming round Coaster's Harbor ; and as they went out the harbor, protected by the guns of the fort, and waving their flags, (of which tradition says they had about a score,) the salute was returned with interest.

Their design was to reach the Rochambeau, for this they perceived it to be, and then act under



the direction of Captain Read. Or, if unable to effect that, to separate, and then close around the brig, and board her, if possible. They had no chance, however, as the enemy did not wait their approach, but drew off in such haste as to leave her prize, which she had retaken, and which was now carried triumphantly into Newport, Captain Sprague mourning all the way, that there had been no fighting. As night was approaching, it was possible the privateer, favored by the darkness, might have succeeded in eluding the enemy and got into port without the help of the company from Bristol, but she must have lost her prize.

They all, doubtless, felt well satisfied with their bloodless victory, except Colonel Barton's representative, who could not be made to believe it was any thing but his ill luck that prevented a fight. And he affirmed to the end of his days, that if Colonel Barton had gone in his stead they might have had a chance for a few shot, but it was his fate. The whole account of this, the author had from the mouth of Captain Sprague himself.

It appears that Colonel Barton, aggravated by the continual alarms, at Providence, and enormities committed on the shores and islands of Narragansett bay, asked and obtained of the Legislature of the State of Rhode-Island, the command of a few boats for the defence of the coast in this region, but we have no particular account of any captures, or skirmishes with the enemy in that service though how much evil he might be the means of preventing we cannot now ascertain. For ourselves we think the glory of preventing any evil, is greater, than revenging it afterwards.

In the spring of 1781, a part of the Rhode-Island regiment, were ordered to the western part of New-York, for a reinforcement of the main army. Whether Colonel Barton was then engaged in his

nautical expedition, or for what reason we cannot say, but the part of the regiment on that fatal occasion, was commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene, and Major Ebenezer Flagg. They were surprised by a party of Delancy's regiment of refugees, at Pine bridge, near Croton. About forty of them were killed on the spot, a number wounded, who afterwards perished by British cruelty, and the rest, except a few who escaped, made prisoners. Among the prisoners were Colonel Greene and Major Flagg, Lieutenant Ebenezer Macomber, of Providence, and Ensign Greenough. These were destined to witness cruelties almost too horrible to mention. The terrified inhabitants, women and children of the neighborhood, had retreated into their houses where they were fired upon by the remorseless ruffians, killing the innocent and defenceless; and horrible to tell, the wounded left on the field, were cut to pieces by these demons in human form.

It was a singular thing through the whole war that the tories or refugees were the most active in the shocking cruelties practiced, of any of his Majesty's friends, a sure proof that when a man has so far conquered all feelings of patriotism and love of country as to league with her enemies, Satan has no work too black for him to engage in. We could in this place digress to give a list of names engaged in these atrocities, aside from Benedict Arnold, that would astonish our readers, of names that would be deservedly consigned to endless infamy, but we do not wish to wound the feelings of the living. Many of these wretches have descendants now living in our country, that are of a different stamp from their progenitors, and many of them, we grieve to say, have perpetuated their principles in their descendants. Hence the hatred to every thing connected with republican-

ism in a certain class in our country ; the ridiculous aping of every thing appertaining to rank, or in other words, nobility. The extravagant encomiums of every thing English, and the epithet of "our gallant foes," whenever they are constrained to speak of the English as opposed to us ; and all that fulsome rodomontade that makes every *fashionable* party so infinitely disgusting and supremely ridiculous to persons of sense, of reason, and of principle.

We do not wish that individual or national animosities should be cherished ; we believe in the excellence of the precept that enjoins the duty, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; and if he thirst, give him drink." But we think this the extent of the command. And we do not paraphrase it thus, "If the enemies of thy country and thy family, those who have butchered in cold blood and loaded their prisoners with fetters and with stripes, prosper in the earth, take thou them to thy bosom ; praise, flatter, exalt them ; seek to justify them when they inflict the same abuses upon others ; imitate their manners, and teach thine offspring to reverence their name," &c.

But we are digressing, and must return, to say that among the unhappy prisoners destined to witness the atrocities at Pine Bridge, there were two who determined to escape or perish in the attempt. They were Lieutenant, afterwards Colonel Ebenezer Macomber and Ensign Greenough, who effected it at the risk of their lives, and who, by dint of starvation, sleeping in the woods nights and other hardships, made out to reach Rhode-Island in safety, and brought the news of the slaughter and imprisonment of their brethren.

Colonel Macomber twice escaped after being taken prisoner by the British. Once after a skir-

mish with the enemy in the depths of winter, he with a number of others escaped ; they fled many miles, and at length, worn out with fatigue took shelter in a wood, and rested for the night. During the night a deep snow fell, and when their active leader aroused them on the dawn, with the blast of a trumpet, each one as they arose shook the white fleeces from their garments, and some of them, so benumbed and bewildered by the death-like sleep they had yielded too, thought it was the resurrection, and that they were aroused by the blast of the last trumpet.

It was in allusion to this, probably, and some other fatal encounters, where a part of the regiment of Rhode-Island was engaged, that Colonel Barton made the remark, "that he had but just escaped in several instances during the war ; an exposure that in ninety-nine chances out of a hundred, would have been fatal ; but from some unforeseen occurrence, or singular providence, he had been prevented from being engaged in it." There were certainly some very singular things in his life, and it was a curious circumstance, after the evacuation of Newport, one of the first prizes brought into port was by the "William Barton," a new brig called after the Colonel, and commanded by Captain Bishop, of Providence.

It is worthy of remark that Colonel Barton continued to the end of the war to exert himself in some way or other for the relief of the distressed inhabitants of the captured towns, and those who had had their property destroyed in our vicinity, and particularly for the enlargement of captured Americans, suffering in British prison ships, and confined in other places ; his attempts were often, and indeed almost always rendered abortive by the manœuvres of the British, who seemed to take a very peculiar pleasure in thwarting the efforts



of individuals for the exchange of their friends, by changing about from place to place; and in the instance of Lieutenant John Vial, of Johnston, who was taken in Connecticut while on his way to Providence with several others to join General Sullivan; and whom no persuasions would induce the British to exchange, until after the capture of Burgoyne's army, when he was wanted to make up a number to send by cartel in exchange for some of similar rank. For eight weeks they continued to hurry this poor man from prison to prison, waiting, as they said, "for a suitable opportunity to try and hang him for treason;" he having once been imprest into their service. It was in vain that the Colonel and others sent on documents to prove his parentage, &c., and the fact of his being taken in Boston harbor, and compelled into the British service. His exchange could not be effected until after the capture of so large a force, when it suited their convenience to exchange him.

To attempt something for the release of this unfortunate man and his companions, while they were confined in a prison ship in the harbor of Newport, was a subject of much meditation and consultation with Colonel Barton, but the attempt was deemed by every one but himself, so impracticable, that it was never attempted.

The trials and hardships of this singularly unfortunate, and brave man, were so great, that we cannot pass by the opportunity of giving a short sketch of his eventful life, which the writer of this narrative took down from his own lips while he lay on a sick bed, and very shortly before his death. The writer called with several others, at his own request to take the sacrament with him, and afterwards remained and took down the narrative of his sufferings, with a view, should she

survive him, of having something done for his destitute widow and child.

Lieutenant John Vial, was born in Johnston, on the 12th of May, 1756. He became an orphan, doubly so, while an infant, by losing both his parents, and was brought up among strangers, in the family of a farmer, and worked on a farm until the Revolutionary War commenced. In the beginning of the troubles at Boston, he foresaw what was going to happen, and resolved to devote himself to his country. He first enlisted at Cambridge in the company of Colonel Hitchcock, and fought in the battle of Bunker Hill. Though very much exposed and engaged in the heat of the contest, he escaped injury. At the expiration of his term of eight months, he concluded to go to sea; having a particular liking to a sailor's life, and thinking he could fight on the water as well as on land, he went to Plymouth and engaged in a privateer, but was captured soon after in Boston Bay and brought in there, and then sent with a number of other prisoners to England. It was in the month of January, confined in a noisome hole, deprived of warmth, of air and exercise, and almost of food, the poor young man sunk under his sufferings, and upon his arrival in England, had to be sent to a hospital; here, owing to a remarkably good constitution, he recovered, and as soon as he was able to do duty, put on board a 74 which was about to convoy a fleet to Halifax. Upon his arrival there, the 74, (which is believed to have been the *Lark* frigate, afterwards stationed at Newport,) was ordered to New-York to convoy some victuallers. While at New-York, Mr. Vial contrived to escape in one of the boats, and get safely on Long Island. Having become acquainted with the watchword of the night, he passed the guards in safety; and after traveling all night, he stopped at a farmer's

and solicited work, but was unsuccessful. A Quaker family gave him a breakfast, and a man at the farmer's handed him a dollar. The snow was very deep, but he proceeded on his journey, through a wood to a miller's house to get employ; here he was again unsuccessful, and had to keep on. The next place he stopped at was a tory's; they would not take him in and told him to go to the tavern and get his lodging. This was indeed, very fortunate; the tavern-keeper was a secret friend to the rebel cause, as they called it, and concealed him a week, with the hope of conveying him away; but not being able to effect it with safety, he sent him in a cart to the other end of the island to a miller's, where he was kindly entertained and directed to a house in the next village, to get a chance. There was no one at home, but a poor woman who kept school hard by, received him into her room, directed him to a man who would carry him over to Saybrook in a boat; and taking her little supper of hot cakes, from the fire, thrust them into his pocket, and bade him depart, before she was suspected. Cold, exhausted and forlorn, he turned from her door, and wandered on, when, meeting a kind countryman, he ventured to disclose his situation, and was immediately taken on his horse and carried home. From thence, the man took him on the following night and skulled him over to Saybrook (Con.) Here, delivering himself up to the American force stationed there, he was examined by a council of war, and by them assisted to get back once more to Providence.

He fought at the battle of Rhode-Island, in Sullivan's expedition, and was left on the island by mistake. Being on the piquet guard, they forgot to notify him at the retreat, and he fell into the hands of the British, and was kept for a time in

one of the prison ships laying in the harbor of Newport.

He once more entered the army, and received an ensign's commission in Colonel Israel Angell's regiment, which was then ordered to Red Bank to reinforce General Washington. From thence he went with Major-General Thayer's division to garrison Mud Fort. During the hot contest there, which it will be recollected was one of the fiercest in that region, or even during the war, Mr. Vial had his hat shot off his head, by a cannon ball. Afterwards he was again ordered to Red Bank, soon after which he was sent out with two others to reconnoiter the enemy. While on this service, his horse was shot from under him, and one of the three, Captain Clark, being unable to extricate himself from his horse, which was also shot, was taken prisoner. Mr. Vial and the other escaped. Mr. Vial fought in the battle of Red Bank, where his commander, Capt. Shaw, of Newport, Rhode-Island, was killed. He says, the British, in this attack, fought us 43 minutes, and we beat them off. The ground was covered with the slain. We had, he says, 15 killed and 17 wounded. Finding General Clinton was coming on with his forces, they then evacuated the fort, and passed over into Pennsylvania to effect a junction again with the main army, under Washington. They then marched to a place called Hickory Hill; the enemy went out of Philadelphia to attack them, but abandoned it, without coming to battle. They then crossed the Schuylkill and retreated to a wood, where they had to take up their lodging for the night, cold and half starved. To add to their distress, a heavy snow fell during the night; and in the morning, three of them were sent out to procure food. They were refused it, and had to forage; shooting some sheep and chickens, and car-



rying them back, where they were immediately cooked and eaten without salt. He afterwards went into winter quarters with the main army at Valley Forge, where they suffered much, as is well remembered; it being what was emphatically called the hard winter, and the army poorly provided with clothing, and a great part of the time food difficult to obtain.

Mr. Vial afterwards fought at the battle of Monmouth, and for his bravery on that occasion, was promoted to a lieutenancy. After the battle of Monmouth he was sent to Rhode-Island, to join the forces under General Sullivan, and was again taken prisoner on the way. The hardships of his fare during the eight weeks, before mentioned, impaired his health so much, that upon his exchange, he threw up his commission and left the army. Upon the partial recovery of his health, he resolved to perfect it by going on the water. He accordingly engaged in a privateer belonging to John Brown, of Providence, and after a successful cruise, returned; and he again went out in one belonging to Welcome Arnold, of Providence. This was captured on the coast of South-Carolina, and Mr. Vial, with thirteen others, were set adrift on the wide ocean in a little open boat, without any provisions, or any means of helping themselves whatever. Providence, however, watched over them, and they were driven on shore on a plantation not far from Charleston. The planter received them kindly; and after a few days, managed to procure them a conveyance to Rhode-Island. A second time Mr. Vial embarked in a vessel belonging to Welcome Arnold; and was again taken and carried into New-York. He did not fare so well this time; being imprisoned in that horrible place, on board the old Jersey prison-ship, and confined there three months. He was then ex-

changed, and got to New-London, the wreck of a man, a mere skeleton ; and so reduced by the dreadful cruelties of his imprisonment, that the people had to bring him on from house to house, by easy stages, to Johnston, where, after a long time, he recovered. This was the substance of his narrative.

The writer will just add, that Mr. Vial married a daughter of David Brown, of Providence, and had one or more children; resided many years after in the town of Johnston, a peaceful citizen, and industrious man. He lost his wife, and afterwards married again, and had one child; being prostrated by a blow of the palsy, he was entirely helpless for the last five years of his life, when their whole subsistence depended on his pension. His widow and little orphan girl are denied a continuance of his pension and all the benefit of the late act for the relief of the widows and orphans of revolutionary pensioners, because *they were married after the war*. Every act intended for the relief of human beings, passed in our country, must undergo so many abstractions, amendments and additions, and be the subject of so much speechifying, before it passes into an act, that it becomes so mutilated, as scarce to be recognized for the same. There is such a terrible alarm sounded whenever any of the revenue is asked for, that it is almost discouraging to apply, in any case. In the act in question, they have hedged it so completely, that none but those who cannot possibly *live long to want it*, can come in for a share. And any man who was so prudent, so magnanimous and so patriotic, as to refrain from marrying until peace was declared, until his country had no further call upon him, until there was some prospect his wife would not be a widow next day, is to be punished for it in his remotest generation, if he

fought through the whole war, ruined his health, and spent all his property in the service, and married the day after, his destitute widow and impoverished children can receive no benefit. May God grant that so great a scandal may, ere long, be wiped from a law, originally intended to promote the cause of justice and benevolence.

Colonel Barton was a man of lively and cheerful temper and convivial powers, and he was always ready to promote innocent festivity among his fellow citizens. He was one of those whose gratitude for the kindly interference of the French nation, was really enthusiastic; no person enjoyed the visits of Rochambeau, of Lafayette and their friends, to his native town more than he did, or was more urgent to have the rights of hospitality extended, even to the meanest private, that he enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his friends is certain, that he had enemies in private as well as in public life, is equally certain. That there were, and still are persons who would gladly have stripped the laurels from his brow, the writer of this is fully aware.

Colonel Barton lived to see peace once more restored to his bleeding country, to see her established in an honorable and well earned independence, and he considered it as his boast and his privilege. At the close of the war he found himself the father of six sons, to which were afterwards added a seventh, and two daughters; who were all educated in good moral principles and industrious habits. That they should be sober, industrious and useful citizens, was the height of his ambition. Having suffered much to put away thrones and principalities from among us, he had no desire to see any orders of nobility established; and all aping of such "trash," as he used to call

them, (for he considered all titled gentry a nuisance upon earth,) was his perfect disgust and aversion. In his principles and taste he was truly republican.

It has been erroneously said that General Barton received a liberal pecuniary recompense from his native State, for his services during the revolutionary war. His pay, which was reduced to almost nothing, by the depreciation of the Continental bills, was made good to him by the Legislature of Rhode-Island, according to the recommendation of Congress ; and an estate formerly belonging to the Banisters, refugees, in Newport, and confiscated, was awarded to him to make good the same.

Colonel Barton was not rich at any time. About fifteen years before his death he became involved in a lawsuit in Vermont, in consequence of his purchase of a township in that State. This township, now called the town of Barton, in the county of Orleans, was purchased of the State of Vermont, instead of being, as was reported, the gift of the United States. His title to a part of the land was afterwards disputed, and contested in law ; and according to the best information the writer was able to obtain on the subject, was alternately decided for and against the plaintiff. Much chicanery was practised, and finally, the whole cost of the court thrown on the Colonel to pay, on account of the inability of his antagonist, as we have been informed. Be that as it may, the Colonel considered the demand as perfectly unconstitutional, and finally said he never would pay it ; and with him, his word was final.

He was sued, and detained in the town of Danville, in Caledonia county, for this sum, trivial in itself, fourteen years. During this time he boarded at the hotel, where there was good society, and



appeared to enjoy life as usual. He had already lived to the common age of man, and probably thought himself so near the end of his mortal pilgrimage that it would make no difference, and when he was committed, never calculated to see his home again.

Providence, however, had ordered it otherwise. The great and good Lafayette visited the United States in the year 1824, and learnt with astonishment and indignation, that the brave General Barton was a prisoner, 300 miles from his home, that he had pledged his word never to pay a debt, which his principles forbade ; and that the nation he had so essentially benefitted, the State whose interests he had served, and his heroism honored, had not stepped forward to release the aged veteran, without the sacrifice of his word.

Lafayette at once decided upon going out of his way to his aged friend, and most affectionate was the meeting between these ancient veterans. No spectator could, or did witness it unmoved. To his persuasions, however, of interfering to release him, the Colonel would not listen ; and there was no way but for Lafayette to proceed without his knowledge, which he resolved to do, knowing that he would then be obliged to return to his friends.

He immediately despatched a messenger to discharge the debt, and the first intimation the Colonel had of it, he was at liberty. He returned to his home ; his aged partner, the companion of all his best years, the sharer of his joys and sorrows, of his hardships during the time that tried men's souls, was there to welcome him ; his children crowded round him ; the surviving veterans of the revolution came to congratulate him ; his neighbors and friends in abundance offered their congratulations. The Colonel received them all with his accustomed politeness, gave them his

hand, and expressed himself with perfect cheerfulness and good humor. But the charm of life was broken! fourteen years, at his time of life, had made strange alterations; the faces of his old friends who survived, were strangely altered, and he himself, most altered of all; and the greater part of those whom he missed were dead. He had been cheerful, apparently contented, during his sojourn in Vermont; ever lively, outwardly so at least, but who, except He who can read the heart, knows what is passing there? Who can tell how often the smile upon the lips belies the pang of soul? To a person of General Barton's social turn what a deprivation, to lose the society of his family for such a term of years. His friends—he must have regretted less; for what is friendship? What is fame? The breath of popular applause; the shout of the rabble, that dies upon the breeze. All this he was then compelled to understand; notwithstanding which, there was a feeling of conscious integrity, a remembrance of self-devotion, the lambent flame of patriotism, the all-satisfying assurance, that for his country his labors had not been in vain; prosperous and happy they were, whether grateful or not—and this supported him. He was too good-natured ever to be really angry for any time with any one, except the British, and them he never really forgave for their abuse of the defenceless prisoners that fell into their hands. He could conceive of such barbarities among Turks and Russians, but among an educated, intelligent and religious people, he was always amazed, and quite exasperated when he thought of it.

One of the greatest amusements of the Colonel after his return to his native place was, whenever his infirmities would admit, to walk round and see the improvements of the place. An anecdote was related to the writer some months since, highly

diverting, and which we cannot forbear to relate. The aged veteran had been toiling up a hill, during one of those solitary rambles, to take a bird's eye view of the city, when feeling himself much fatigued, he seated himself upon the door-step of a handsome house to rest, and began to fan himself with his hat. He was perceived by the mistress of the house, who immediately called to a servant to ask what venerable old gentleman it was, and to have him invited in to rest. "Why, la, ma'am, it is old General Barton, sat down to rest himself there, to be sure."

The lady flew to the door, and invited him in. He declined, very politely, saying he was quite comfortable where he was. But the lady insisted, and telling him he was a person she had so long wished to see, he was obliged to yield. She conducted him into the drawing room, and seated him on a sofa, and ordered a servant to bring in refreshments; then seating herself opposite, she introduced herself, and commenced a very interesting conversation. The heart of the old gentleman warmed, as she spoke of the various characters who had been his friends and cotemporaries, during the stormy period of the revolution; and by degrees he was drawn out and induced to speak of scenes long gone by, in which he had himself been an actor. After conversing about an hour, in which his memory and animation seemed fully returned, he rose to depart, and very cordially thanked the lady for her politeness; he lingered a moment, then said, "I really do n't know how to take leave of a lady who has been so exceedingly kind and polite, without kissing her once." "Certainly, sir," said the lady, "to receive a kiss from a revolutionary hero, and that the brave General Barton, would be an honor I should always remem-

ber with pleasure;" and stepping gracefully across the room, she presented her cheek. Never did devout Roman Catholic kiss the shrine of his tutelar Saint with more apparent reverence, than the General pressed his aged lips, to the blooming cheek of his hostess; then shaking her affectionately by the hand, and bowing low, he departed. It was the first and last time she ever saw him. He lived but a short time after.

The writer of this narrative called on the Colonel a short time before his death ; he expressed great satisfaction to see a person with whose family he had been so intimate in former years. He was exceedingly indisposed at the time, but said, at parting, that the next time she called, he should kiss her. The writer has to regret that she has not that honor to boast of, as ere she saw him again, the icy hand of death had for ever closed the lips of the venerable hero.

A gradual decline seemed to have come over the health and faculties of the Colonel from the time of his return to his home, and he lived but a few years after. It was in vain his family watched over his declining days, with intense interest ; in vain his fellow townsmen, sought by every kind and respectful attention, to remind him they had not forgotten his services. The period of his mortal life had arrived, and the Great Commander summoned him to lay down his arms, and appear before his God. He departed this life on the 22d day of Oct. 1831, aged 85.

The immediate cause of his death, was a fit of apoplexy, which he survived only a few days, and from which his mind never recovered, as he was perfectly insensible to all around him, from the moment of the attack, to that of his death. Of his state of preparation however his friends and family who were with him, during the last years



of his life, have no doubts. General Barton was a professor of religion, in early youth. He was a member of the first Calvinistic Congregational Society (and indeed the only one of that order, ever organized in the town of Providence.) The Rev. Mr. Snow was then pastor of it. After the commencement of his military career, he was never known to commune there. Whether it was because he judged life in the camp to unfit one for church communion, or whether from some distaste to the doctrines or discipline, is not known; but as it occurred at a time when there was a great secession from that society, probably the latter, as he did not leave the going to meetings, and regular attendance on public worship. When at home, he regularly attended at the First Baptist, and was an intimate and very attached friend of the late Stephen Gano, pastor of that society. After his return from Vermont, he daily read the scriptures, keeping it with a volume of Watts's hymns on a stand at his elbow, and resorting to it from time to time, through the day.

It would not be safe to judge the conscience of any individual, by their ceasing to be a communicant in a church. It is a fact, though not generally known, that the father of our country, Washington, himself, previous to the revolutionary war, was a communicant in the then Church of England, but he never went to the communion table after. No person could tell the reason—he never gave any; and it is altogether a matter of conjecture what his motives were. That he was a religious man throughout, every one believed; a man of prayer, even in a camp. Whether he had an idea, as many persons at that day had, that there was a kind of tie between the parent government and the Episcopal Church, which would never be broken, we cannot tell; but if that was

his reason, that difficulty must have been removed when he found a very large proportion of that church foremost in the republican ranks, and even deserting and impeaching their clergy, because they would pray for the king. This reason, then, would cease to operate; and we are finally obliged to believe that he felt the life of distraction he was obliged to lead in the camp to be an unsuitable preparation for church communion, and from the habit of staying away, the return was postponed from time to time. A descendant of his family, and one well acquainted with all its domestic history, communicated this fact to the author; but they did not hazard a conjecture as to the cause.

## CHAPTER IV.

WE come now to consider the character of the person whose history we have been writing, and this, as death has set his seal, we have a right to do. Perhaps there is no better evidence of the intellectual and moral feelings of an individual than their writings, and we regret to say we have but little of the General's to exhibit. In the first place, the employments of a soldier, and his society, are not very favorable to the cultivation of literary talent; and in the next place, the Colonel's education was very limited. It was such as prepared him for what his parents designed him, a respectable mechanic. And we may ask with

reason, if with his education, his limited means of information and acquaintance with military tactics, he was capable of conceiving and accomplishing what he did, what would he have been, if he had combined all those advantages ?

Posterity will in general judge fairly of the actions and character of an individual, but a prophet in his own day, as well as in his own country, is without his reward. We look more at the little excentricities, and oddities of temper, and peculiarities of speech, and of apparel, yes, even down to the cut of his coat, than to his good properties or brilliant actions. The Colonel was beloved in his regiment, and beloved in his family, and by the circle of familiar friends with whom his social hours were passed. He was a person of old fashioned notions, and old fashioned politeness—that kind of politeness which is in constant exercise for the comfort or amusement of his company in an especial manner. - We allude to it because it is so very old fashioned. In these days of entire selfishness we are fearful it would not be understood. An anecdote illustrative of this was narrated to the author a few days since, by Captain Joshua Langley, of Providence, who many years since used to run a packet between New-York and Providence, in which he went as Captain. General Barton, among a number of others, was a passenger at one time, and owing to a stress of weather and sundry hindrances, they did not get to port until after the astonishing passage of twelve days. The Captain had a hard time, for as often as there was a prospect of getting in, it was destroyed by some fresh disaster. The patience of the ignorant passengers would entirely leave them, and grumbling and discontent almost broke out into open mutiny. At those times General Barton always stepped in, and the angry elements seemed hushed

at his presence. He possessed a great deal of humor, and had laid up a fund of anecdote, and at these times would collect a group around and entertain them, until they completely forgot their former unkind feelings. When alluding to their unpleasant situation, he never failed to remark, "Our landlord has, after all, the worst of it," meaning the excessive expence of boarding so many people, for such a length of time, without any additional charge. The Captain himself was so delighted with his stories, and imperturbable good humor, that he would gladly have carried him through every trip, as he said, "for the sole recompense of listening to him."

Whatever honor accrues to him who wraps himself up in haughty and impenetrable silence, and avoids his fellow-beings as though he feared the infection of some pestilential disease, they were welcome to all such honor from the General. His was the honor of endeavoring to make others happy, of trying in all kinds of company to promote social intercourse and harmless gaiety.

A custom among some of those characters of olden time of kissing the ladies, to whom they were introduced, may occasion a smile in these days, but we have been assured by many worthy and excellent persons now living, that it meant no more then, than Frenchmen mean now, by kissing each other. But they all add, *the world has grown so wicked since they were young*, that it is proper the fashion should be given up. As respected the Colonel, we believe we may say in truth, it was the extent of his gallantries.

It has been said by some of the cotemporaries of Colonel Barton, that he was vain-glorious on the subject of his exploit in capturing Prescott, because he could bear to hear it conversed on in his presence, and would talk of it himself; a re-



mark which we should think too contemptible to repeat, if it were not for the pleasure of combatting a sentiment, which in these days of finesse, of false delicacy, and ridiculous pretence, is becoming quite common. For our own part, we can see no impropriety in speaking of what we understand, or narrating whatever we have been eye-witnesses of, or actors in. To us, we must confess, there is something infinitely interesting in hearing travellers tell their own story, soldiers "fight their battles o'er again," &c. ; and we recollect being once the most thoroughly provoked, by discovering we had been two years boarding in the family with a gentleman, who acted a distinguished part in one of our naval battles during the last war, and who never in all that time spoke on the subject, or revealed, when others were speaking of it, that he had even been a witness of it ; so much information as he might have communicated, of such an intensely interesting nature!

To be on all occasions thrusting ourselves forward, and intruding our own affairs upon the notice of people, and becoming upon all occasions the hero of our own story, is disgusting in the extreme ; but there is a medium, and we think the other extreme quite as much so. It has been the fortune of the writer of this narrative to be acquainted with several persons who have observed as much caution when speaking of themselves and their business as though they had belonged to some gang of counterfeiters, or been concerned in highway robbery ; persons whom we sincerely believe to have been honest and well disposed ; but who by their extreme caution and secrecy have often been suspected of being otherwise.

It has been observed in another part of this narrative that Colonel Barton was an unwavering republican ; that he had the most sovereign contempt

for every thing bordering upon aristocracy. "To get rid of these paltry things," he would say, "we took up arms, and shall we after shedding our blood to be free, bow down our necks again to the yoke of bondage."

But although the Colonel had the most supreme aversion to titles of nobility, he never forgot the rank he had himself held in the republican army, and however highly provoked, no mortal could have prevailed on him to fight with any one who held a less rank than himself in the army. The thing has been tried, but the experiment failed. The Colonel would not degrade the office he held.

The Colonel has been accused of cherishing vindictive feelings against the English, and of trying to keep alive a spirit of resentment against a nation that, although once foes, we have long considered as friends. It should be remembered, that Colonel Barton lived in an age, when he had a chance to see more of that people than we, his successors on the stage of action, ever had, and it is hoped ever may. The tender mercies of the British, towards those whom policy, prejudice, or love of dominion, inclined them to crush, was too well known to that veteran. He could not believe that feelings of deadly hostility had been conquered by *fears of rivalry*. He remembered the fate of France—the centuries of unrelenting warfare that had been waged against her. He remembered, not only the inhuman butcheries that had been perpetrated in this country in cold blood, the prisoners despatched by the lingering death of famine, the unparalleled sufferings upon our coasts, the stirring up of ruthless savages, and all the horrors of a barbarian mode of warfare. He remembered not only all this, and the oppressions that drove us to take up arms, but he remembered other things that followed. The Algerine war,

which so immediately followed the treaty of peace between them and Great Britain—the wonderful friendship all at once cemented between that nest of pirates and Great Britain, and the immediate hostility manifested towards ourselves—the fifty sail of corsairs built, and fitted out at Gibraltar to cruise against our infant navy, and hurry our unoffending citizens into a bondage worse than death—worse than any thing except their own prison ships. The anti-ministerial papers in England stated this fact and remonstrated loudly with the government on the subject at the time. We have never seen any denial from the other side.

We observe that things which now appear to so many as a mere tale of romance, were actually witnessed by the heroes of the revolution ; and is it any thing out of nature that they should have shrunk with horror from the association with persons whose hands were yet reeking with the blood of our fellow citizens ? that they should have refused at the close of the war, to court the acquaintance of the officers that remained in the country and join to frolic and feast those with whom it was a matter of perfect indifference at the moment, whether they were dancing at our expence, or cutting our throats ? Notwithstanding all this, we repeat, Colonel Barton was a man of benevolent feelings, and would not have withheld from an enemy in distress, any relief they might have asked for. That he was above the sordid thirst of gain, which characterized our enemies in his day, we may well believe, from the circumstances attending his capture of General Prescott. It was well known that the General had more or less money with him, and the house of Mr. Overing contained a considerable quantity of valuable plate, and other things of cost, and nothing could have

been easier than to have brought it off; there was a sufficient number with him to have rifled the house without any additional risk. The house of General Schuyler was completely stripped in much less time, by the British, (who never failed on any occasion, to add plunder to their other achievements,) and although an armed force was at hand in a few moments, the property was never recovered; but Colonel Barton disdained to have a hand in robbing a private dwelling of private property.

Among the papers of Colonel Barton, of which we grieve to say very few remain at this day; we have not been able to find many which would be very interesting to the reader. The following, as exhibiting something of the courtly style of those days, we have transcribed; the first is one of congratulation, written a few days after the burning of Bristol, where General Barton was wounded.

Letter from his Excellency Henry Laurens to Colonel William Barton.

YORKTOWN, 20th of June, 1778.

Dear Colonel—I most sincerely congratulate with all your friends, on your late acquisition of glory, and on your prospect of appearing again with vigor in both fields of engagement.

I interest myself, I cannot help it, in the welfare of every brave man; therefore, Sir, I request you to let me know as soon as you can, under your own hand, the state of your wounds and health in general. The gazettes which I here enclose, will afford you much information, and an hour's agreeable amusement. The enemy have certainly abandoned Philadelphia, but their movements are at present inexplicable.

Three thousand troops they say are embarked, and gone down the river, the rest encamped be-



tween Hadonfield and Cooper's Ferry. If this be true, and I have it from good authority, it gives scope to much conjecture.

Believe me, my dear Colonel, to be with great esteem and regard,

Your obedient humble serv't,

HENRY LAURENS.

Colonel WILLIAM BARTON.

P. S. General Arnold is appointed to command in the city, by General Washington.

The following, accompanied the sword, which though it was voted at an early day, was not completed until after the war. The sword, still preserved in the family of Colonel Barton, is one of very fine workmanship; the blade of tempered steel, silver hilted, chased with gold, in emblematical devices, and the words, "Gift of Congress to Colonel Barton. 25th July, 1777." Its cost was 100 dollars. The letter is from the Hon. Mr. Knox, Secretary of War.

*War Office of the United States,*

NEW-YORK, August 1st, 1786.

Sir—In consequence of the resolve of Congress of the 25th of July, 1777, I have the honor to transmit to you the sword therein directed, as a permanent evidence of the just sense entertained by that illustrious assembly of your address and gallant behaviour in making prisoners on Rhode-Island, Major-General Prescott, and Major Barrington, his aid-de-camp.

To the expressive approbation of the supreme national authority, was added the unanimous applause of the army. The enterprise was justly regarded as one of those hazardous actions, whose success depends upon the exact combination and

execution of a multitude of parts, and therefore, the more glorious.

The circumstances of the late war prevented the execution of the orders of Congress, as it respected the sword, until the present period.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and

Very humble servant,

J. KNOX.

The answer of Colonel Barton was as follows :

PROVIDENCE, August 10th, 1786.

Sir—I have been honored with your letter accompanying the sword which Congress ordered me, July the 25th, 1777.

This mark of approbation from that august body, fills me with the most agreeable sensation. It is not in my power to describe how much I esteem this noble present. I shall forever look up to that illustrious assembly with a heart filled with gratitude for this mark of distinction. To be assured by the first characters that composed the American army, that any part of my conduct met their approbation, gives me the greatest satisfaction.

The enterprise against General Prescott was hazardous, but what crowned it with success under the smiles of Providence, was the bravery and unshaken firmness of those who were with me.

The elegance of the sword, is an ample compensation for any delays that the war occasioned in the delivery of it.

I am, with sentiments of the highest esteem,  
your most obedient and very humble servant,

WM. BARTON, late Colonel  
in the army of the United States.

Hon. Mr. Knox, Secretary of War.

Louis XVI. was very much diverted with the story of the taking of General Prescott off Rhode-Island, and it was said, laughed very heartily when it was related to him, and that he instructed Mr. St. John, his Consul at New-York, to obtain from his captor, a particular account of the transaction. We recollect hearing this many years since, spoken of, and we were never acquainted with the fact, or indeed, made any inquiry after, about it, not then anticipating the honor of being his historian. The following letter, in the Colonel's hand-writing, found among his papers, and purporting to be the copy of an answer to one from Thomas Lloyd Halsey, Esq., of this city, was, in our opinion, a confirmation, and we made no further inquiry.

The answer to Mr. Halsey's letter is in the following language :

PROVIDENCE, Nov. 8th, 1787.

Dear Sir—Your request to me in favor of the Hon. St. John, Consul of his Most Christian Majesty, at New-York, for the narrative of the capture of Major-General Prescott, is so flattering, that I have not power to refuse it. I have had applications for the narrative before; but as yet, have given none. Having always viewed his Most Christian Majesty as the saviour of my country, if I should refuse one of his Consuls so distinguished a moment's pleasure in my power to bestow, would be the greatest ingratitude. Enclosed is the narrative, with a sketch of the river, islands, and part of the enemy's shipping, which you have my consent to send to the Hon. Mr. St. John.

You must be sensible how difficult it is for a person to give the history of an enterprise in which he himself was concerned, without many embar-

rassments. I must entreat you, dear sir, to make every apology possible, to the Consul.

I am, with sentiments of the highest esteem,  
Your friend and very humble servant.

WM. BARTON.

To Thomas L. Halsey, agent of his Most Christian Majesty, for the State of Rhode-Island.

In person, General Barton was of middling height, light complexion, brown hair, and blue eyes; in his youth he was esteemed handsome. His portrait, taken during the war, exhibited a fine looking man in the prime of life, clothed in the *Continental* uniform, and bearing on his shoulder the ensignia of his office. The countenance, a remarkably placid one; the predominant expression was that of extreme benevolence; though there was mingled something of determination. It was shown us by the aged partner of his bosom, 'Come,' said she, leading the way to another apartment, "I will show you how he looked in his youth; that was his portrait taken soon after he entered the army, and did he not look well in those days?" A flush once more visited her cheek, and the fire of intelligence sparkled in her eyes while she stood with her hands meekly folded on her bosom, in contemplation of the portrait. Oh, what a memory of long past scenes, of buried joys, was there, while the events of half a century rushed through her brain, as looking back through the long vista of years upon the gallant youthful soldier, she described the skirmish and the battle, the nights of feverish anxiety, the days of wearisome watchfulness, when the sound of every gun struck terror to her heart; the shouts, the acclamations, the ringing of bells, and the triumphal entry of her hero husband to his native place after a successful enterprise; one which for daring exposure and



real audacious courage was not surpassed, scarcely equalled during the war of independence. Her eye droops, the scene changes, the war is over, the rescued nation prosperous and happy ; but he, the partner of all her joys and sorrows, torn from her side, declining into the vale of years, a prisoner for fourteen long years in a distant part of the country, and ere she again beheld him, an old man, tottering on the verge of the grave. She heaved a deep sigh, and saying, "there is another portrait," led on to the room beyond. The other portrait was taken during the last years of his life. Time had laid his hand upon the head of the venerable hero more gently than upon almost any other person we have ever known ; yet it was a contrast, although an exceedingly well-looking and handsome old gentleman.

General Barton enjoyed the esteem and friendship of many distinguished persons in the revolution, and during the very last years of his life he often spoke of their kindness with feelings of the liveliest gratitude, saying, he was not worthy of all the kindness he had received and the honors bestowed on him, inasmuch as his success had not been owing to his own superior courage or sagacity, but the dauntless bravery of the men under his command. Never was he heard to insinuate that his services had been ill requited, either by the general government or his native state, though others have often said it. The commander in chief, General Washington, entertained a high opinion of his coolness and courage, in the capture of Prescott, and has been heard to express himself with much animation on the subject.

General Barton, with other gentlemen from Providence, was in the city of New-York, and preparing to call on General Washington. Several persons who had called on him that morning mention-

ed that the General was too much indisposed to see company on that day, and that they had called and been denied. General Barton, however, called as others, probably willing to show his devotion to his late commander in chief, by calling at an early day, whether he saw him or not. He merely announced himself as Colonel Barton, when the servant requested him to stop a moment, and directly returning, requested to know if he was the Colonel Barton who captured Prescott, and upon being answered in the affirmative, conducted him to the chamber of the General, where, notwithstanding the indisposition of the chief, he had a long and very interesting interview. Upon being questioned on his return to the hotel "if he had seen the General," he very frankly related his reception. We will not say that the recital gave equal pleasure to the hearers, as it afforded the narrator.

And here we cannot forbear to revert to that most remarkable feature in the character of the departed hero, viz. : that simplicity of speech and singleness of heart, which distinguished him through life. He never could be made to comprehend, but that whatever gave him pleasure, would be sure to please others also. It does not seem as though a person who has seen so much of life, of mankind, had passed so much of his time in camp, where all the worst passions of human nature are supposed at times to display themselves, could have been so ignorant of the world, as to suppose this: and that it was owing to dullness of apprehension, we know was not the case, for in any thing of the least exciting nature, the lightning's flash was not quicker than he was. We can only then account for it, in one of two ways, either by supposing that he was really ignorant of the deep depravity of the human heart, or that he was determinately

unmindful of the existence of feelings in the human breast, calculated to destroy all the harmony of social intercourse, and effectually to shut the heart of man against his brother man ; the latter seems most probable. He was certainly in the habit of expressing himself before almost every one, as though all mankind were his sworn friends.

But if honesty, frankness, and simplicity of character, are not popular in this world, we trust they are fully appreciated in that, where the departed hero now finds rest, and where the laurels of victory are not woven for the brows of the merely successful soldier in an earthly campaign, but for him who wars successfully against the sinful maxims and fashions of the age, and its debasing practices.

The departure of General Barton from this world, was one of peace : no struggle, with the king of terrors marked the event, no spasm or agonizing contortion wrung the hearts of the sympathizing spectators, but "summer evening's latest sigh, that shuts the rose," is not more gentle, than was the sigh that dismissed the spirit of the hero from its mortal tabernacle, and wafted the immortal soul to the presence of its Creator.





## A P P E N D I X .

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### Note A.

The village of Warren is here stated to be on the east side of a little cove or creek ; it would perhaps be proper to observe, that this cove extends to the north several miles above Warren, and there is a river, formerly called Palmer's, which empties into it just north of the village; it is now very generally called Warren river. Across this river there is a bridge, as well as another across the cove, which is narrow at the head of the village, and then expands immediately above and below. At the time of the burning of Bristol and Warren there were no bridges and the cove was passed by a ferry boat plying from the port, across to the tongue of land mentioned in the description of the place. This circumstance accounts for the delay of the forces of General Sullivan coming up. To carry a large body of troops over in these ferry boats must have taken time, and occasioned very considerable delay. After the war these bridges were built, and held many years by an incorporated company; of course they were toll bridges, and a bridge over the Seekonk, or as it is sometimes called Pawtucket river, built by John Brown, a citizen of Providence, was also, and still is a toll bridge; so that the beautiful towns of Warren and Bristol remain as a treasure hid in a box, which only a golden key will open. To speak without metaphor, those places are cramped and kept down by the difficulty of getting at them. The Warren bridge has been sold into the hands of one

individual, but it does not lessen the evil. There can be no doubt that it has retarded the growth of both those places, and it certainly prevents many strangers from visiting them, and parties of pleasure from taking them in their drives.

It is not the mere expense, that is trifling, about twelve and a half cents per bridge, but it is the intolerable vexation of being stopped every few miles to pay toll. The villages on the east side of Narragansett Bay, are far more delightful than those on the west, but less frequented for this reason. We should suppose it a great oversight in those towns, to let the bridge sold, pass into the hands of an individual. The increased prosperity of these towns would have been an ample remuneration for purchasing them and making them free. A bridge or a turnpike that gets into the hands of a company or a family, every body knows, never gets out; they contrive that it shall never pay for itself.

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#### Note B.

The family of General Barton were not wealthy, but highly respectable ; their residence was about two miles from the village of Warren, at a place now called Barton's Point. General Barton, however, spent most of his youth at the village, and served his time there at the occupation which he subsequently worked at. A nephew of his, (Capt. Seth Barton,) who seemed to inherit all his spirit, was an officer on board the Yankee, privateer, during the last war, and enacted prodigies of valor.

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#### Note C.

There are several old persons now living in Bristol and its vicinity, from whom we received

some of the particulars narrated in this biography. To one, a remarkably old gentleman, who perfectly recollects the scenes enacted there during the revolution, we made the request that he would describe the manœuvres of the enemy at the bombardment of the place, just as he witnessed it; and it is with pleasure that we lay before the reader his natural and graphic description of that event, in a letter which he did us the favor to write a few days since. Agreeably to his request, we suppress his name, otherwise we should have given it with pride and pleasure. He was also so very obliging as to procure for us a copy of verses composed on the occasion, by some of the wags of Bristol; and which like that made upon the destruction of the "Gaspee," and the capture of Prescott, they used to sing in those days, maugre the deficiency in numbers. The letter is as follows:—

BRISTOL, November 5, 1838.

RESPECTED FRIEND,

October 7th, 1775, the day when Wallace fired upon the town of Bristol, I was something over ten years old, and all the circumstances relating to that event are fresh in my memory. It was on a pleasant afternoon, with a gentle breeze from the south, that the ships at Newport got under way and stood up towards Bristol, (appearing to us a pretty sight.) The wind being light they did not arrive till sunset. Wallace, in the *Rose*, led the way, run up and anchored within a cable's length of the wharf. I think the other ships' names were the *Gaspee* and *Eskew*. The next followed and anchored one cable's length to the south. The other one, in endeavoring to go further south, grounded on the middle ground. Besides these I think there was a bomb brig, and a schooner.

The schooner run up opposite the bridge and anchored. I was on the wharf, with hundreds of others, viewing the same, and suspecting no evil. At 8 o'clock the Commodore fired a gun. Even then the people felt no alarm, but in a very short time they began to fire all along the line, and continued to fire for an hour. The bomb brig threw carcasses, machines made of iron hoops, and filled with all manner of combustibles, to set fire to the town. They threw them up nearly perpendicular, with a tremendous tail to them, and when they fell on the ground they blazed up many yards high, several of which were put out. One of them fell in a garden near where I now write. A man went to a well near by to get water to put it out. He had hardly got from the well when a cannon ball tore down the well curb. Others of these missiles fell in various parts of the town, but none of them took effect. The cowardly rascal, after firing for an hour or so, being hailed by one of our citizens, ceased firing, and a committee from the town went on board, and his demand on them was a number of sheep and cattle. I believe they collected a few, and the next day, being Sunday, he got under way and left us, with a name not yet forgotten. Being a boy I was sent into town next morning to drive away some cows, when all was still. In passing the field of corn where Rev. Mr. Burt was found dead, having fallen on his face on a hill of corn, I saw the ground fresh dug up. I commenced digging with my hands, and found a nine pound shot, which must have passed very near him, as it was in exact range of him and the ship; and it was supposed by some that the ball passed so near him as to cause his death, though no marks of its effects were found on his body.



It is marvellous that there were not more people killed, as the bridge was crowded with people all the time of the firing, and the schooner lay within pistol shot of the bridge and kept up a constant fire. The rest of the ships fired grape, round and double-head shot, which were plentifully found after the firing.

It was a very sickly time in town. Some died that night or shortly after, and the holes in the houses where the sick and dying lay, are still to be seen. The following verses were made on the occasion.

### BOMBARDMENT OF BRISTOL.

In seventeen hundred and seventy-five,  
Our Bristol town was much surprized  
By a pack of thievish villains,  
That will not work to earn their livings.

October 't was the seventh day,  
As I have heard the people say  
Wallace, his name be ever curst,  
Came in our harbor just at dusk.

And there his ships did safely moor,  
And quickly sent his barge on shore  
With orders that should not be broke,  
Or they might expect a smoke.

Demanding that the magistrates  
Should quickly come on board his ships,  
And let him have some sheep and cattle,  
Or they might expect a battle.

At eight o'clock, by signal given,  
Our peaceful atmosphere was riven  
By British balls, both grape and round,  
As plenty afterwards were found.

But oh ! to hear the doleful cries  
Of people running for their lives !  
Women, with children in their arms,  
Running away to the farms !

With all their firing and their skill  
They did not any person kill.  
Neither was any person hurt  
But the Reverend Parson Burt.

And he was not killed by a ball,  
As judged by jurors, one and all ;  
But being in a sickly state,  
He, frightened fell, which proved his fate.

Another truth to you I 'll tell,  
That you may see they levelled well ;  
For aiming for to kill the people,  
They fired their shot into a steeple.

They fired low, they fired high,  
The women scream, the children cry ;  
And all their firing and their racket  
Shot off the topmast of a packet.

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*Mrs. Williams, Author of Religion at Home, &c.*

It is stated here upon authority, that the sheep and oxen were sent. Thus far history, but history is mistaken; the sheep, &c. were not sent, for just as they were about to be embarked in the boats, Captain Martin of Seekonk arrived with his company, and protested they should not be sent. Now Wallace upon his arrival in the harbor of Bristol had sent a boat with the white flag, inviting Governor Bradford to a truce. The Gov. accordingly went off in a boat to meet the commander, and to hear the arrogant demand of provisions, &c. which he declined furnishing them with; the conference of course was broken up, and as the

boat, containing the Deputy-Governor, turned about to return, the enemy fired a broadside into the town, the balls of which went over the head of the Governor, and came near sinking his boat; he however reached the shore in safety, and attempted to reach his house through the garden. He had to climb the fence, and as he did so the board on which his hand rested was carried from his grasp by a cannon ball.

The town of Bristol was at that time visited by an epidemic, which had proved very mortal, and there were at that time three persons lying dead in the place; the mortal part of Mrs. Bradford the Governor's wife had been consigned to the tomb only the day before; the terrified inhabitants therefore, thought the sword and the pestilence were let loose upon them at once. The Governor at first was unflinching, and stoutly protested their demands should not be acceded to, but at length yielding to the persuasion of the inhabitants, who saw nothing but destruction before them, he concluded to supply the desired quota of sheep and oxen, upon their ceasing their fire, and removing out of the harbor. It was some work to collect the animals, and by the time they were ready to ship, the veritable Captain Martin arrived with his company. He would not hear a single word about embarking them, but bringing the field-pieces upon a small eminence, that commanded the bay, commenced a fire upon the enemy's shipping. Opposed thus unexpectedly, and placed now at a disadvantage to renew the contest, the ships of Wallace made their way back to Newport.

The account of this transaction in history merely states that the enemy would not desist from firing on the town until their demands were complied with, and leaves us in the belief that the an-

imals were actually conveyed on board. Nevertheless, that was not the case, although they had been collected to be embarked. This Captain Martin was the father of Simeon Martin, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the State, as also of a numerous family of sons beside.

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#### Note D.

*Capture of Prescott.*—This exploit, certainly one of the most hazardous attempted during the whole war; is just casually mentioned in history, accidentally brought in, as it were, and yet it was very important in its results. The main army at Long Island was then in a most discouraging situation, and the news was most happy in its tendency, as respected them; it seemed to put new life into them, and to the Commander-in-Chief it was infinitely agreeable. It was observed to the author by a gentleman then with the army, that he had never seen the cloud so deep upon the usually placid brow of Washington, as it was immediately before the news of Prescott's capture; his situation was then as it was many other times, painful and embarrassing; and the effect was like electricity, the rejoicing among his soldiers was so exhilarating. Was there no other reward, what a happiness to have given one moment's pleasure to the great, the good, the ever to be remembered Washington!

As to the capturer himself, the enthusiasm with which he was received when he returned to his camp at Tiverton, must have been highly gratifying. While mounted on a wood-pile, he rehearsed the story, giving all the credit of the transaction to his trusty soldiers who accompanied him. Some of his hearers made the remark, that there was



no office that could have been put in their gift, but what they would have freely bestowed upon him at that moment. It is much to be regretted that the whole of the names of those brave men were not preserved. There was a soldier by the name of Daniel Page, a descendant of the Narragansett tribe of Indians, who discovered great bravery and presence of mind on the occasion. After leaving the Overing house with their prisoner, this man recollected that General Prescott's sword was left behind, and imagining he could find it and regain the company, he returned back to the house, and groped his way to the room, found the sword and overtook the company before they regained the shore, and presented the sword to Colonel Barton. This poor man never lived to get his pension; he resided in the neighborhood of Fall River, where the remains of his family still are. Persons may wonder he was not mentioned in the communication of Colonel Barton; but it may be accounted for in three ways. It might have escaped the recollection of the Colonel *who* handed him the sword, or he might possibly have been ignorant of the manner in which it was obtained, or he might have thought it invidious to particularize any, where all were so brave, and each, as it were, took his life in his hand. We forgot to mention that the negro servant who attended the Colonel in that expedition, was sometimes called Jack Sisson, and in fact this was his name. How it happened that he had an alias to it we cannot tell.

The names of the immortal forty who composed this heroic band, are here inserted.

*List of the followers of Barton at the capture of Prescott.*

*Officers.*

Andrew Stanton,	Samuel Potter,
Ebenezer Adams,	John Wilcox.

*Non-Commissioned Officers.*

Joshua Babcock,

Samuel Phillips.

*Privates.*

Benjamin Prew,

Joseph Ralph,

James Potter,

Jedediah Grenale,

Henry Fisher,

Richard Hare,

James Parker,

Daniel Wale,

Joseph Guild,

Joseph Denis,

Nathan Smith,

William Bruff,

Isaac Brown,

Charles Havett,

Billington Crumb,

Pardon Cory,

James Haines,

Thomas Wilcox,

Samuel Apis,

Jeremiah Thomas,

Alderman Crank,

John Hunt,

Oliver Simmons,

Thomas Austin,

Jack Sherman,

Daniel Page, a Narragansett,

Joel Briggs,

Tack Sisson, the Black,  
and boat stealer,

Clark Packard,

Samuel Cory,

Howe or Whiting, boat  
stealer.

James Weaver,

Clark Crandall,

Sampson George,

John Hunt, James Weaver, and Samuel Cory, belonged to the neighborhood where Prescott was encamped, and were perfectly acquainted with every spot of ground in its vicinity, and after they disembarked these acted as guides. The greatest precaution was used in muffling the oars; and when at Warwick Neck, the boats were hid in the bushes until they were ready to start again. The wits of those days composed a song on the occasion, which they used to sing much to the annoyance of the English in their neighborhood. It is related that after Prescott had returned to his station at Newport, at one of their carousals, he insisted on a song, when one of the company observed, "There is a boy in the kitchen who is a

famous singer." Prescott had him called in, and commanded him to sing. The child said he did not recollect any except that about Barton's taking Prescott; and immediately sung the following :

The day was spent, the evening fair,  
When Barton marched his men with care  
Down to the river's side ;  
And unto them most nobly said—  
" Let none embark who are afraid  
To cross the swelling tide."

But they, like hardy sons of Mars,  
Inured to hardships and to wars,  
Most nobly did reply :  
" With manly rage our souls on fire,  
We scorn the thought for to retire ;  
We conquer will, or die."

Thus did they cross and march away,  
Where Prescott's host encamped lay,  
On hostile measures bent ;  
Young David took this bloody Saul,  
And sentry, aid-de-camp, and all ;  
Back to the boat they went.

You watchful host who round him kept,  
To guard your General while he slept,  
Now you have lost your head ;  
Since they from freedom's happy shore,  
Returned and brought their booty o'er,  
The hero from his bed.

Go to your king, and to him say,  
" Call home your troops, call them away,  
Or Prescott's fate they 'll share."  
For Barton, with his sling and stone,  
Will bring the great Goliath down,  
And catch him in a snare.

It is related that Prescott made the best of it ; commended the boy for his singing, and gave him half a crown.

It is much to be regretted, that a false modesty, or some strange whim, prevented several of these brave men from accepting a commission, which they had offered : they would then have enjoyed a pension adequate to their wants. They seemed to think because they had not an education they were incompetent to hold a commission. The subsequent adventures of these persons would be highly interesting ; but history and tradition have left us in the dark respecting most of them. Samuel Cory fought in several battles afterwards. He was in Sullivan's expedition, and fought bravely on Lawton's Hill, where he was the last one to retreat, and being pursued by a party of Hessians, faced about and fired his ramrod at them, not having time to load. He then fled and gained his company. Several times he fought in a platoon where he was almost the only one that escaped. He afterwards fought in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth, with the Rhode-Island regiment. He was afterwards engaged in privateering, and, with James Weaver, engaged in several desperate skirmishes in the "General Arnold," a sloop that in the early part of the contest was very successful, but which, like its great namesake, was finally *caught by the British*. She was taken in Long-Island Sound, where her Captain had the temerity to engage five times his force. After a terrible slaughter he received a ball in the forehead, when the remainder, taking advantage of night coming on, fled to the Connecticut shore, and begged their way home to Rhode-Island. Weaver is now dead. Samuel Cory is living, 86 years of age.



Samuel Cory, who is still living, relates a humorous anecdote of Prescott, after his landing at Warwick Neck. The prisoner made great complaint of having no shoes; his feet were much scratched and swollen, and Colonel Barton procured a pair of one of the officers at Warwick, for him; and told Samuel to take them up to him, *and put them on*. Sam took the shoes, and Prescott protested he could not wear them, his feet were so swelled, and they would not fit, &c. But Sam very deliberately sat himself down, and went about putting them on, saying, his orders were to put them on to General Prescott, not to see whether they fitted, and that he must obey orders. It was in vain the captive General remonstrated, and writhed about with most hideous contortions of countenance, Sam kept at work with the gravest face, although ready to burst with laughter, until he had forced the shoes on. Sam thought the General must have found out, on that occasion, “where the shoe pinched.”

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#### Note E.

##### *Character of Prescott.*

It seems impossible a being possessing common sense, could have practiced such intolerable arrogance, as he was accused of, and deep malignity too. The reader is no doubt familiar with his methods of exacting outward marks of respect from the Quakers and others: they may not be with the many cruel methods he devised to punish such omissions. An anecdote was narrated to us a few days since quite characteristic of him.

During one of his perambulations about the streets he chanced to meet with one Elisha Anthony, a member of the Society of Friends, and one

from the Friend in passing, called out to know "why he did not take his hat off!" Friend Anthony said "it was against his principle to show those signs of respect to man." Prescott then ordered his servant to knock off his hat, which he did, and they passed on, leaving the Friend who very coolly picked up his broad-brim, and went on. Now this Mr. Anthony, whose residence was on the corner of King-street, (one would think the people of Newport had heard enough of Kings, to alter the name,) possessed a span of the finest horses on the island, and he attended and caressed them with almost as much tenderness as he would have bestowed upon human beings, and the very next day Prescott sent for these horses, saying he wanted them to carry an express to Boston. What he did with one of them is not known, but Mr. Anthony having occasion to go out on the island next day, found one of them rode to death on the road side. The poor horse was dying, and as his master came up to him he recognized him, and lifting his head from the ground, gave him one such pitiful and reproachful look as penetrated his heart. He said he never could get over the feeling it gave him. Warned by this instance of malice, Mr. Anthony secreted his cow and other domestic animals in his kitchen. He had a brother who lived about a quarter of a mile off, whose house took fire, some little time after, and Prescott would not permit fire to be cried, nor any one to go to assist them. He was terribly afraid of a bustle, which makes good the saying, "There is nothing so quiet as despotism." Elisha Anthony took his brother's family to his own house. All they could do for the other was to look on quietly and see it burn. No wonder Prescott was sent back to Newport after his exchange. He was a worthy minion of arbitrary power, though if he

had had the feelings of a man he would rather have been hanged than to have appeared there again. And yet this man could enjoy festivity. The round of feasting and frolicking still went on amidst the groans of the captive, the half famished and oppressed. He still continued, as Trumbull has it, "To dance the ladies to allegiance."

We do not suppose all the British officers there were of his stamp ; on the contrary, it was said he was an object of universal aversion to them, and instances of humanity have been recorded of some of them. On the occasion of the terrible flogging of Thomas Austin, recorded in the Life of Barton, one of the British officers, when he was suffered to go on parole to his house, forced upon him two guineas, doubtless thinking to help him off, whispering at the same time, "Do n't mind it, my brave fellow, your scars are honorable ones." It is refreshing to meet such instances among so much barbarism.

At the time of the evacuation of the island, General Prescott gave orders for every one to keep within doors, and not be seen when his troops marched down to embark ; and for three nights previous orders were issued for no lights to be seen in the dwellings. All this he professed was done for the safety of the inhabitants, but the inhabitants did not give him credit for such generosity. No one believed there was such insubordination in his army, and the object was generally understood to be twofold ; first, to conceal the diminution in his ranks, which desertion and the battle of Rhode-Island had caused, and secondly, to keep out of sight the property they were bearing out before the eyes of the plundered inhabitants. Of course the forbidding them to look only increased the desire, and every plan was devised

to see them without being seen. One lady had the temerity to undraw the curtain as they passed, when instantly an officer observing it, drew a pistol from his holster and discharged it at the window.

And oh ! what a scene of ruin and devastation presented itself upon their departure ! Every thing of value they could conveniently carry off was gone, and every thing left nearly ruined ; the beautiful gardens torn up and all the trees cut down and burnt. The dreadful winter of 1779 and '80, which succeeded, was one of intense suffering.

The French soon after quartered at Newport, and to the honor of that gallant people be it said, they did every thing to heal the wounds of the inhabitants. Besides the protection of their presence, they continued to make themselves agreeable and useful in various ways. Their soldiers were trained to respect the property of every one, and during the whole time they were on the island the whole amount of injury done by them was said not to exceed one hundred dollars, and yet their necessities were great ; fuel, the first winter, was so scarce that people had to burn their furniture to preserve themselves from perishing.

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#### Note F.

During the occupancy of Rhode-Island by the enemy, some shocking scenes were enacted immediately under the observation of our soldiers stationed on Tiverton heights, (where the remains of their forts are still to be seen.) At several different times deserters who had left the British army, and successfully gained the shore, were shot in



the water in the attempt to swim across, where the stone bridge at Howland's ferry now is.

Their fate excited the deepest commiseration, and all the more, as some of them were native born Americans, who had been compelled to enter the enemy's service. On several different occasions, they succeeded in taking off individuals from Tiverton, and dragging them on board their prison ships. At one time they were discovered and pursued, and one man escaped, Thomas Borden, (one of the Fall River Bordens.) He eluded his pursuers, and crept into a ledge of rocks a few miles below Fall River: the aperture was scarcely large enough, as one of the old soldiers observed, to hold a woodchuck, and it was with difficulty he could get out, after the flight of the enemy, who had been chased by a party of Americans, and who, when they beheld him covered with blood, supposed him to be a spirit. The individuals made prisoners in this manner were not soldiers, nor persons taken with arms in their hands, but farmers, peaceably pursuing their occupations. Dragged from their families, and immured in those loathsome prison ships, among the suffering prisoners described by Dr. Isaac Center, the Hospital Surgeon, in the former pages of this book.

So daring had these depredators become, that it was found necessary to organize a company on purpose to keep watch all along the shore, at convenient distances, and there being a deficiency of men, a party of boys, the oldest not more than sixteen, (as is believed,) were engaged for the service. Some of them occasionally were much frightened, but in general they acquitted themselves bravely.

In Bristol, a company of boys had set the example of organizing to assist the military in any

way they should be wanted, and at the burning of Bristol these little lads remained in the place, and although from their tender years unable to defend it, yet upon the departure of the enemy they were of material service in arresting the progress of the flames, saving the property, &c.

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### Note G.

The English vessels that guarded the entrance of the Seconnet river, and occasionally came up, nearly to where the Stone Bridge now is, were a great annoyance. Sometimes, however, they would get aground on the Tiverton or Little Compton side, where the water is very shoal, and occasion much trouble to themselves, and at one time a large privateer of the enemy was run aground on the shore at Little Compton, just below the farm of Deacon Brownell, where the enemy were obliged to burn her and make their escape.

One of the greatest exploits in these waters was performed by a Captain Talbot, who in a little craft called a *Shaving Mill*, surprized a row galley of the enemy in the night and succeeded in capturing her, while surrounded by English vessels, and before morning they had her safe into Stonington. She was boarded, and the sentinels were so suddenly surprized as to be unable to give the alarm; the hatches were immediately fastened down, and a guard set over the Captain, who, being surprized in his berth, was exceeding wroth, and, as Captain Talbot used to tell the story, "Notwithstanding they threatened to shoot him, he kept scratching at his cabin door all night." Upon looking out next morning and seeing the lit-

the craft hitched on behind, he said, "My God ! have I been taken by an egg shell ?" The soldiers ever after, by way of eminence, used to call his captor, "Admiral Talbot."

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### Note H.

Tiverton witnessed much suffering of a domestic nature during the time the enemy were in possession of Rhode-Island. The people were often called to divide their morsel with the suffering inhabitants, who, from time to time, came over, and who came off at the surrender of the town of Newport, and lingered about the opposite shore in hopes their stay might be short, and they be permitted to go back and collect the remnants of their property.

The many cases of individual suffering can never be ascertained, and in fact, it would include an inventory of the whole island, with the exception of a few tory families.

A venerable and respectable citizen of Portsmouth, now living, and one who has for many years filled a place in our legislature and on the bench of justice, in conversation the other day, narrated to us his own recollections of the sufferings of his family during that trying period ; and as it furnished quite a history of what were the trials of so many, we hope he will excuse our recording it, although it was given without the least idea of our giving publicity to it.

"I was," said the venerable Judge, "but seven years old when the British first entered Newport, yet I distinctly recollect the state of alarm and constant excitement during that period. My father occupied a small house, built on his own land,

about three miles equi-distant from Bristol and Howland's ferries. I have but little recollection of what took place, particularly, until one day when the Americans, under Sullivan, were retreating from Rhode-Island. I recollect on the last day but one of the fight, the continual firing which gradually grew nearer the house, as the American army continued their retreat in that direction. Presently four soldiers passed, having a young man on a blanket, which they held by the four corners. He was badly wounded, and afterwards died at the Providence hospital, where he was sent ; he refused to have his legs amputated, and the wounds gangrened. His name was James Pettis. I recollect we were much shocked as they stopped at our well for water ; but still more so, when a flying party averred they had left a wounded comrade on the field, one John Campbell, whom they feared the enemy would kill, when they came up with him ; and we afterwards learnt they did.

The English and Hessians continued to advance, and the firing came so near, my father judged it prudent to retreat to the cellar. While there, a party of Hessians came into the yard and house, and finding we were in the cellar, came round to the outside entrance, and pointed their guns down. A number of glistening bayonets were visible sticking into the cellar, when instantly a most horrible yell was heard ; a party of Americans from behind the wall had sprang over and surprised and made prisoners of them. They passed off, closely guarded, and the firing seemed to pass off in another direction. It was the close of day, and an American soldier rushed into the house and threw himself on the floor completely exhausted, saying, he could go no farther. By degrees he became restored, and he then told us of what he had just witnessed. A party of the enemy came up to the



house of an aged man, and commanded him to draw water for them; and while the venerable man tottered to the well, they barbarously shot him in the back.

Nothing seemed to give my parents so much alarm as this. (We have forgotten the name of this man.) My father said it was time to fly, and bundling up a few things of absolute necessity, and driving the cow before us, we set out, eight children of us, and the youngest a babe of *three weeks old* in my mother's arms. Favored by the darkness, for it was now evening, and acquainted with every step of ground, we succeeded in getting to Howland's ferry, and with our cow, on board a boat, we got safely over, and my father and eldest brother, and one or two others, went over the same night, and brought over the beds. In the mean time, the American soldier, left in full possession, had taken his leave, and all he could carry with him, probably thinking the enemy would get all he left. The next day they ventured over again, and brought off some furniture, &c.; that was the last day of the retreat.

The old gentleman went on to tell us, that procuring a sorry tenement at Tiverton they commenced a life of extreme hardship and privation; that for about a year, he could say in truth they went hungry. The mother used to divide their food at each meal, and allowance them. They used to milk their cow three times a day, and after baking a Johnny-cake, mark it out in so many lots, and give each to one with their allowance of milk; and the patient mother took her portion with the rest, although one of them drew its nourishment from her bosom.

By degrees this source of sustenance failed them; the cow stopped giving milk, and then was pinching times. "I recollect," said the venerable nar-

rator, "and I remember it distinctly, (for it was the only time I ever was tempted to take what did not belong to me,) going to a neighbor's to get some milk, and while the woman went out to get it, I observed a dish of cold Indian dumplings, probably intended for the hog-pail; I watched my chance, and grasping a handfull, pocketed them safely before the old lady's return; and from that time to this, I have no remembrance of any thing half so good as those dumplings."

This family continued to linger in the neighborhood, the boys working at every thing they could do, and the father devising every honest method to keep his family from starving. "Some of the boys were among those set to watch the enemy, and notwithstanding our hardships we grew as rugged as colts," said the narrator, "until the evacuation of Rhode-Island."

Upon the very first news, the family packed up, and proceeded on their return; upon passing the ferry they let the cow loose; and she went strait to her old place. But alas! when the family arrived, there stood the cow *ruminating*, but there was no house; the cellar was left, and that was all. Captain Brady, of the royal artillery, had taken a fancy to it, and not liking its situation exactly had removed it about half a mile off. The family learning its location, once more took their line of march, and went on, and for that winter (the ever memorable hard winter,) resided in it, where it stood; the next Spring they moved it back to its former place.

It does not appear through the whole of this scene of hardship there was any thing like murmuring; the family considered their sufferings as the fate of war, and confidently relying on Providence, looked trustingly forward to a happy termination of our national trials.

The Cory family seemed a peculiarly patriotic one ; two of the brothers, Samuel and Pardon, were among the capturers of Prescott ; and the third, Thomas, was the head of the family of whose sufferings we have been speaking. His son, Thomas Cory, the narrator of this article, married a daughter of Lieutenant Wilcox, one of those who went ahead in the enterprise of taking Prescott.

This brief record of the trials of an individual family, may be considered as an epitome of the whole of those nearly, who had to get off from Rhode-Island at that time. The hardihood with which they endured, is a lesson never to be forgotten. Such, Americans, were our fathers and our mothers !

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#### Note I.

Although almost all men in camp are supposed to be more or less addicted to profane language, it does not appear to have been a practice of Col. Barton. On one occasion only, of high provocation, have we any account of an oath. The blank in the history of the burning of Bristol, was nothing more than a simple Yankee phrase of "by George," then much used. Upon looking back, we perceive it may have been understood in a different sense. The other applied to the cowardly villain who had just fired the dwellings over the heads of defenceless women and children, and yet shrunk from encountering his antagonist, is genuine.

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#### Note J.

Narragansett bay, at the time of Barton's exploit, was completely blockaded by the British ;

the Lark, the Diamond, and the Juno, with their guard-boats, were lying on the east side of Prudence, and it was from these boats as they passed round the south end of it, that they distinctly heard the cry. of "all's well ". During the time the British had possession of Newport, a correspondence was kept up with certain individuals on the island, and the main at Little-Compton.

By this means, there was no movement of the enemy there, but what was made known immediately. They had a signal on the island, of letting down a pair of bars which could be seen with a spy glass on the opposite side; afterwards for fear of suspicion, the signal was changed to opening a barn window; these were to indicate a clear coast, when a messenger might come over in safety; and they also had a hiding place in the same neighborhood, to desposite written communications under a stone; and it was at this place, and in this manner the inhabitants of the island became acquainted first, with the surrender of Burgoyne's army. It is said the paper containing the intelligence, is still preserved in that neighborhood, in the family of a Mr. Barker.



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**LIFE OF CAPTAIN STEPHEN OLNEY,**  
**OF RHODE-ISLAND.**

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## LIFE OF CAPTAIN STEPHEN OLNEY.

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STEPHEN OLNEY, the subject of this memoir, was born in the town of North Providence, and *Colony*, as it was then called, of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, on the 17th of September, 1756, on a farm, which from the first settlement of the State, had been the property of his family, having been purchased by Thomas Olney, a contemporary of Roger Williams, and a joint proprietor in the "Providence Purchase." From this person, Stephen Olney was a descendant in the fifth generation. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, as being almost unparalleled in New-England, that one family in regular succession continued to occupy the same spot of ground, to till the same soil, for a period of nearly two hundred years. Although the rage of emigration was not in an earlier period of our history what it is now; yet it has often been remarked in this section of the country, that it was rare that one family tenanted the same place for more than three generations.

The family of Olneys have been a numerous and scattered one; branches of it are now to be found in the east and west, north and south of our extensive territory; but at the period of the revolutionary war, most of them resided in the vicinity

of Providence, and were content to remain where their ancestors had conquered the wilderness and reduced the stubborn soil to a state of cultivation. Captain Olney was, as we observed before, the fifth in succession, who had been content to spend his days and be married and buried in the same place with his fathers.

The ancestors of Captain Olney were a primitive race, and some of the more remote, of puritanic memory. In Rhode-Island, however, where there was no persecution to keep alive their zeal, gradually the peculiarities of their religion vanished. The real Cameronian spirit could not exist for any length of time without opposition. In Connecticut alone, where the fierceness of their demeanor, and tyranny of their exactions, stirred up a perpetual spirit of revolt and resistance, did it survive for any length of time? In Rhode-Island, as every one knows perfect freedom in respect to religious opinions and ordinances was proclaimed from the first : Roger Williams himself, a persecuted and a banished man, on account of his opinions, had laid the foundation broad and deep, for religious liberty ; and from this cause, probably the spirit of puritanism languished from the time it crossed the borders from the neighboring State, as Trumbull says,

“ They found their zeal when not confined,  
Soon sink below the freezing point.”

We are not to suppose however that the spirit of devotion, the essence of piety, fled with the spirit of puritanism in Rhode-Island, or elsewhere. In peace and rural quiet the virtues of our forefathers had leisure to expand. While no longer subjected to restraints and persecutions that in a manner sanctified them in their eyes, their odious peculiarities vanished.



Puritanism however, had its beneficial effects in America; it was the means under Providence of preparing the minds of the people of New England for the glorious stand they were one day to take in the cause of civil liberty and independence. True that some of their doctrines and practices bordered on the ridiculous. Yet withal, there was a plainness, a simplicity, a spirit of self-renunciation, and self-devotion, that characterized them, long after the more revolting traits had ceased to exist, that paved the way for a government more accordant to gospel simplicity than any that had ever been known on the earth, since the days of the Patriarchs.

Aside from loyalty from that feeling of dependence, and the duty of allegiance which they were taught they owed the monarchical government of Great Britain, there was something in the etiquette of a court, the glare and glitter, and vain parade of royalty excited feelings of loathing and disgust, whenever they were obliged to be spectators of it, or to listen to the bombastic descriptions with which the few papers that then found their way to the colony, were sure to be stuffed. The very language in common use in that day, when speaking of these things, had become an abomination; and there was a gradual but a sure change going on, *a preparation of heart*, as the Quakers term it, from the time that the country first gave the assurance of being populous and prosperous. Of course, no efforts could have been made in the country at an earlier period, for its emancipation, and would not have been as premature as it was, had not the rash and unwise exactions of the British government have pushed them on to take up arms when they did. It was in *New England*, be it remembered, where the fire of patriotism first kindled. In Massachusetts the ancient head-quar-

ters of *Puritanism*, where the first blow was struck for liberty.

Captain Olney had passed his short and tranquil life, in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture; having no wishes beyond the boundaries of his farm, in plenty and rural quiet; the sound of war, and indeed of contention of any kind had never disturbed his habitation. He had just married, married the woman of his choice, and though only bordering on his 20th year, had quietly settled down to pass the residue of his days in cultivating his farm, in rearing up a family and walking in the footsteps of his fathers. How vain are the calculations of man! Could some warning angel have suddenly stood at his bed-side and lifted the curtain of futurity before the eyes of the youthful bridegroom, in those, his days of the greatest felicity, he was ever to know on earth; could the scenes of carnage and bloodshed, he was doomed to witness and to participate in, have been revealed to him then, the nights of wearisome watching in the tented field, the days of harassing fatigue, the pains of hunger, the pinching cold, the "flight in the winter season," and all the woes he was to witness and to suffer, it is doubtful whether the very prospect would not have overwhelmed him; whether he would not have shrunk from participation in the contest.

Yet it was from this his earliest dream of love and happiness that the stern mandate of duty to his country compelled him to awake, and the greatest of all possible tributes we can pay to his memory, is to say, he arose and left all, and followed it.

Our business is not in this place to give a history of the war, or the immediate or remote causes that produced it. Yet we are obliged to speak of the situation of affairs in the immediate neighbor-

hood to which the hero of our story belonged. Rhode-Island was, at the time our story commences, in about as much trouble as any of her sister States, and in fact, the most exposed of all ; and next to her nighest neighbor, the Bay State, in rather the most trying situation. She was not only menaced on her sea board, but divided at home ; and thwarted, and contradicted, and perplexed, by some of the most contrary, stubborn, disobliging, crabbed, self-sufficient, wavering, and two-sided public officers, that ever one little State was troubled with. Many of them who had wonderfully helped to get up the excitement, by speeches, remonstrances, and resolves, and who had winked at the tea affair, the destruction of the Gaspee, &c. now that the contest had come to blows, began to back out, and be amazed that the people should think of taking up arms, and shocked beyond expression that such a rebellious spirit should have got abroad, and although few of these comparatively threw up their possessions, and departed from the country, which their shuffling policy impelled them to desert ; yet they found this a rampart behind which to shelter themselves in the coming storm, a fence upon which they continued to seesaw, until towards the close of the Revolution, when all danger of their getting into hot water being over, many of them suddenly began to be very patriotic, and with great public spirit came in for their share of the spoils.

At the time of which we are speaking, however, these prudent individuals held back, and kept themselves aloof, nor could all the remonstrances of their irritated and aggrieved fellow-citizens bring them forward.

Captain Stephen Olney, the subject of this memoir, had, as early as the year 1774, become a

private in a chartered military company, called the North-Providence Rangers ; their object being, as he states in his manuscript, "to learn military tactics, and to be prepared to act in defence of our country's rights." The history and political writings of the day will account for the enthusiasm with which they engaged in this undertaking. He adds,

"In May, 1775, the Colony of Rhode-Island ordered three regiments to be raised for the protection of the Colony, and as part of an army of observation, and I," says Captain Olney, "was honored with an Ensign's commission in Captain John Angell's company, second Rhode-Island regiment, commanded by Colonel Hitchcock. Who recommended me I do not know ; but it was not by my own intercession. But perhaps they chose me because they could get no better, so many were deterred from embarking in the cause for fear they might be hanged up for rebels by order of our then gracious sovereign, George III. I accepted this commission with much diffidence as to my qualifications ; my education was but common for that day, and worst of all, what I had learned was mostly wrong." Perhaps a more sensible remark does not occur in the narrative. Besides being very superficial, so many radical errors were then prevalent in the manner and matter of education, in that comparatively dark age, that we look back with astonishment. As to himself, the Captain observes, "I had no fear that our gracious sovereign would think me worth hanging for a rebel." Too many subsequently found out, that if subalterns were in no danger of hanging, there were ways of despatch provided for them when taken. Captain Angell, he says, was a very pleasant man, and a real patriot ; Coggeshall Olney, his first Lieutenant, was active and full of fire, jealous that



people were apt to slight him, but an honest, faithful officer. They were eight or ten years older than myself, and very friendly—so I looked on them as my protectors. And we found no difficulty in recruiting our company for eight months with good men, at the end of which time it was expected the dispute would be settled, or that our spirits would be settled in another world.

The first destination of the company to which Captain Olney now belonged, was Roxbury, to join the forces there, under the command of Gen. Nathaniel Greene, which consisted of three regiments, viz. : Colonel Daniel Hitchcock's, Colonel Thomas Church's and Colonel James M. Varnum's. They were raised, as Captain Olney says, without any trouble, armed and equipped in much better plight, than many of the undisciplined and half-equipped companies forming the motley parade at Roxbury.

But now a new difficulty most unexpected and unlooked for intervened to prevent their immediate departure. The patriotic Representatives of Rhode-Island were harassed with opposition from within, as well as from without. In Rhode-Island where the first decisive act of hostility had been perpetrated in the destruction of the Liberty, and the burning of the Gaspee, there were many violent tories, who opposed all the measures of the friends of liberty in every way, until the contest had progressed so far that they themselves were obliged to quit the country and seek safety under the shadow of arbitrary power ; but by far the most difficult to get along with were those who were in favor of half way measures. Those mongrel patriots, that we have made mention of in a former page of this book—many of them in Rhode-Island, had been very instrumental, as the British had it, "in setting this hurly burly agoing," and



either had not courage to carry it through, or could not give up their preference to hereditary greatness, their love for the pomp and parade of royalty and nobility, or were extremely conscientious respecting their oaths of allegiance and duty to the parent country, or it might be, not quite certain of the event, and resolved to keep on the safe side. Numbers of those persons had gone hitherto every step with their patriotic brethren, until the contest was about to come to blows. Persons who in the onset were foremost in remonstrances and speeches, &c. now that their own measures began to take effect, drew back.

Among those who halted at this time, to the astonishment of many, and the regret of all, was the Governor, Joseph Wanton, of Newport. He had in the beginning gone with the people, but now that affairs had begun to assume a more serious aspect, that the measures they had been agreeing to had had their full effect, that war with all its horrors stared them in the face, that it was no longer a question, should we sit tamely down and be still, while remonstrances and petitions were treated with contemptuous silence, or answered at the point of the bayonet, the Governor discovered that he abhorred treason, and protested that while argument or persuasion or petition were alone resorted to, he was as willing as any, to assist in it, but when it came to fighting, it was quite another affair, and positively and obstinately refused to countenance the resort to arms, by signing the commissions of the officers appointed to command in this expedition; it was in vain that reasoning was resorted to, in vain that the indignant members urged that to have gone thus far and stop now, would be worse, infinitely worse, than to have remained passive before. That the British Lion had now shown them his teeth, and besides

that the spirit of liberty (so long fostered by patriotic speeches and resolutions) was now abroad in the country and had taken possession of all ranks. That blood had been shed, and that the sword that was now leaping from the scabbard, it was evident could not be sheathed until the country was free, or reduced to hopeless and unconditional submission. That the eyes of mankind in this region had become opened now to a divine right of kings until it had ceased to become a question; that the Governor was bound by every obligation to take part with his suffering countrymen, and finally hoping that patriotic feelings would at length influence him on the morrow, the Legislature ajourned.

What was to be done? Should he refuse, the Governor knew the contempt at least, of an irritated people, would pursue him; the loss of office was certain. But again, should he accede, and put his name to the *fatal papers*, what might not the consequences be? If the friends of freedom failed ultimately in their enterprise, the cause would be branded as "treasonable rebellion," and the aiders and abettors thereof, hung and quartered. It was too fearful an alternative to risk; and after deliberately weighing the probabilities of the case, the Governor resolved to go no further; and at the next meeting made his protest against "having any hand in arming and equipping men to fight against his sovereign." Thus saying, in effect, that while talking was all that was required of him, he was as ready to talk as other men, but fighting was another affair; that five cents upon a pound of tea, and a few shillings upon a stamped paper, used only upon occasions when people might be supposed to be able to pay for it, was a most intolerable grievance, and worthy to throw the whole country into confusion, because it took money from the pockets of the people; but that the

shedding of blood wantonly was a trifle, and called for mature deliberation, whether we should resort to it or not. That the great principles of self-government, of liberty and independence, were things of doubtful origin and uncertain tendency, but the taking away a few dollars from a man's pocket, was a thing that admitted of no manner of doubt, its unavoidable tendency being to make him poorer, he had therefore felt himself called upon to resist such demands ; but the demand of allegiance to an arbitrary and despotic power, not founded upon the choice of the people, but originating in accident, and maintained by brute force, that is, military despotism, was a thing not to be disputed.

We do not say that the Governor gave utterance to just such sentiments ; for had he, Governor or no Governor, the Legislature would have hurled him from his seat without the ceremony of voting him out, and the hall would have been cleared of him in *less than no time*, as Pat says. Oh no, he very politely, but firmly declined the honor of putting his name to a paper (which might hang him,) which his conscience could not approve, and renewed his protestations that he had been perfectly willing to go with his suffering brethren in remonstrance, appeal and petition, to redress their grievances, while that alone was resorted to, but he was not prepared for an appeal to arms, and should not, by his name, sanction any such unlawful and rebellious proceedings.

It was in vain that the General Assembly endeavored to reason the case with him ; he was as obstinate as a mule. Those who composed the State Legislature, had agreed, almost without a dissenting voice, and they were not now to be baffled by one Governor, or twenty Governors ; true they attempted reason, but they might as well have attempted to reason with the little stub-

born Dutch Governor described in Knickerbocker's history of New-York, who never stood it out with more obstinancy than the redoubtable Governor of Rhode-Island. But the Assembly were not to be baffled; finding every thing useless in the way of argument, they proceeded forthwith to call a vote suspending the Governor from his functions.

They then offered the command of the *Captain-Generalcy* to the Deputy Governor, Darius Sessions. This gentleman, from motives of delicacy towards Governor Wanton, declined. Hitherto the two Governors had acted in concert and were firm friends, and to be thus set over Governor Wanton it seems was so repugnant to the feelings of Governor Sessions that though in a good cause, he declined; consequently, the Legislature were thrown upon their own resources.

It does not appear that Governor Sessions was a tory, at any time. He was a man of quiet deportment, and unfitted for the stormy season in which he was called to act; and probably aside from feelings of delicacy towards Governor Wanton, he disliked the bustle of public life.

By another vote they then declared themselves the sovereign power in the State; elected by the sovereign people; and proceeded forthwith, to sign the commissions themselves, giving the Governors leave to retire until they could have time to make better ones. Which they very soon did, in the persons of Governors Cook and Bradford, two consistent, firm and unwavering Patriots, who continued to administer until the close of the war. Most prudent and providential was the selection; fearless and faithful they assisted in conjunction with their brethren to steer the ship into the harbor of independence. Peace to their memories; "another age," says Emmett, "may write my epitaph." To the firmness, the love of country, the un-



tiring patriotism of Governors Cook and Bradford, the State of Rhode-Island owes a lasting obligation. In the most perilous times they dared to stand at the helm and direct the vessel of State through rocks and quicksands; the fire from off the altar of liberty had warmed their hearts, and no cold and calculating questions of expediency were for a moment suffered to suggest themselves. Months and years have come and gone since the sod has been heaped upon their manly breasts, yet, has not the recollection of their worth, their firmness at the post of duty and of danger, faded from the minds of their grateful countrymen.

Governors Wanton and Sessions retired, the one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise; meanwhile the war-like preparations in Rhode-Island went on.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE commissions being duly signed, sealed and delivered to the respective commanders, on the first of May, 1775, the regiment of Colonel Hitchcock on that day paraded to the North-Providence meeting-house, to put up prayers before their departure, which was to be next day; for, according to the pious usages of our forefathers, they resolved not to undertake any thing without first asking a blessing upon it. What feelings must have swelled the bosoms of that simple congregation at such a time; the mother was there with



her babe in her arms, about to take leave of the husband and father; perhaps forever. The aged sire, whose gray hairs had been whitening through three score years, to offer upon the altar of his country, the most acceptable sacrifice that could be offered; even the one that Abraham was commanded to make. The children went to add the lisping prayers of infancy, for the holy cause in which their fathers were engaged, for the safety of their beloved ones; oh, it was a solemn time, when the aged Elder Ezekiel Angell stood and commended the souls and bodies of these his youthful friends and parishioners to the Great Father of mankind; the Protector, Defender and Saviour of men. What heartfelt prayers, what stifled sobs must have agitated the bosoms of the multitude, as he spread forth his hands and blest the departing host. Spirit of the living God, thou wast not invoked in vain! up to the heaven of heavens, the prayer of the righteous ascended on that day, for the husbands, the fathers, the sons, and brothers and neighbors, and fellow citizens, of the assembled multitude. The prayer was said, the blessing given, the last fond kiss and fevered shake of the hand exchanged, and the little band for the first time turned their backs upon their happy homes, and went forth to meet the enemies of freedom, to dare and to die if necessary: the prayer of that day, says Captain Olney, "was for the preparation of our souls, and success in the cause in which we were engaged."

The force, now wending its way to Roxbury, consisted as we have stated, of three regiments. The first, from the county of Providence, commanded by Colonel Daniel Hitchcock; Ezekiel Cornell, of Scituate, (afterwards General Cornell, and subsequently a member of Congress,) was

Lieutenant-Colonel, and Israel Angell, of North-Providence, Major.

The second, from the counties of Kent and Kings, (afterwards Washington county,) was commanded by Colonel James Mitchell Varnum, (afterwards Gen. Varnum,) and Christopher Greene, Major; and including Gen. Nathaniel Greene, who was General of the brigade.

The third, from the counties of Bristol and Newport, was commanded by Colonel Thomas Church, a descendant of the famous Captain Church in the old Indian wars, and Henry Sherburne, of Newport, Major.

There was also added a company of artillery, commanded by Major John Crane.

Perhaps it is well that melancholy impressions dwell not long on the mind of the soldier. "We marched along in high spirits," says Captain Olney, "though with rather quivering apprehension, on first sight of the British." It seems they had the impression that they should have to fight immediately, an impression common to new soldiers who in the commencement of the first campaign think only of the tumult of a battle, a battle lost or won, without taking into account the long nights of watching and fatigue they may endure. First, the toilsome travel by day, faint often with want of food, and perhaps with want of a resting place to eat it. "They expected," says Captain Olney, "to be called on to pour out their blood as a sacrifice to their country's cause, or to drive all before them." Neither of those events were in reserve for them; they found themselves after a tedious march of forty miles, near Boston, and the red coats in sight, strongly fortified, and in a much better situation than they had imagined. They, the Americans, were encamped on Jamaica Plains, some little distance south-west of Roxbury,

where they were drilled to military and camp duty until the famous battle of Bunker Hill; when the enemy began to fire shells and shot into Roxbury to draw their attention from Bunker Hill. "The Rhode-Island troops," says he, "were for some time drawn up just within reach of their shells, and not being acquainted with those sort of missiles, it was with great difficulty the men could be kept in the ranks, especially when they imagined a shell was about to light on their heads. It was judged when a shell appeared perpendicular, it would pass over harmless; but if it began to descend a little, before it reached that point, it might be dangerous; but fear always makes danger, and in order to prevent fear from warping my judgment, I held up my gun by the muzzle as a perpendicular, and kept my post, as did also our company; although it was reported that part of us ran away and I remained collecting their arms." It seems part of the men only, were sent forward, while the others at the foot of the hill acted as a kind of reserve, though exposed to nearly as much danger as those in the forefront of the battle, and without the excitement of personal contest to keep up their courage; whether there was not room for all on the hill at once, or whether it was judged necessary they should remain to cover the retreat of the American army, in case they had to retreat, we cannot tell, but their commander, before the battle was over, considering their position unnecessarily hazardous, ordered them to march out of danger. The events of that disastrous day—even more disastrous to the British than to the routed army—are too well known to need recapitulation here, notwithstanding the superiority of numbers, and discipline of the enemy, the Americans would, it is believed, have achieved a most perfect victory, had their ammunition held out.

Their warlike stores being destroyed at Concord was a most terrible loss to them, and on several occasions beside this, the want of powder and ball was the most serious grievance they had to complain of.

From this time the Rhode-Island regiment was stationed at Prospect Hill, doing fatigue and garrison duty, and oftentimes exposed to the fire of the enemy's artillery, though but few lives were lost, and by degrees they became inured to danger : it must have added much to their trials, the weather being so extremely sultry. The battle of Bunker's Hill, it will be recollected was fought on one of the hottest days ever known in the country.

Thus, and in skirmishing parties sent out to intercept the foraging parties of the enemy in the neighborhood of Boston, passed the winter of 1775 and '76, a winter never to be forgotten by the imprisoned inhabitants of Boston, suffering from cold and famine, debarred from all communication with friends without, and constantly dreading treachery and violence within, what must their sufferings have been ? afraid to stir out of their houses for fear of the petty insults of hireling soldiers, whose jibes and taunts were the least insults dreaded from them.

But if the situation of the American part of the population was trying, that of the enemy was not without its trials. Their army was not sufficient to guard conveniently all the exposed posts of the city and peninsula of Charlestown, which by the event of the battle of Bunker Hill, had now come into their possession.

The fatigue of their soldiers had multiplied to an excessive degree, the heat of the summer being so extreme, had debilitated them, and generated diseases which had materially thinned their ranks,



and paralyzed their movements. Their wounded, a great part had died from the influence of climate and want of proper food, and no doubt of proper care; so that besides the name of winning the battle, they derived no real advantage from the victory, if such it could be called, of Bunker Hill. Thus proving what ought to be obvious, that a people coming from one country to fight another, have on the whole much the worst of it. On the contrary, in the American camp provision was plenty, the greater part of the wounded being accustomed to the climate were easily cured, and their minds animated with new views, new ardor, altogether new feelings. It takes one battle, at least, to bring people to the right temperament; and added to this, the American forces in that region had something continually in view to inflame their patriotism. The lately flourishing and beautiful village of Charlestown lay before them, a heap of blackened ruins. How was it possible to look on it and reflect upon the destitute families turned adrift upon the world, through the wanton cruelty of the British commanders, without a thrill of horror and a desire of retaliation?

Perhaps the most painful duty which the Americans were condemned to during the interval of the battle of Bunker Hill and the succeeding March, when the British evacuated Boston, was the throwing up entrenchments at Roxbury, continually exposed to the fire of the enemy, often a house burnt by their shells, and some dead to carry off the field daily. This must have been a service irksome in the extreme.

Great sympathy for their suffering countrymen, penned up in Boston, was continually felt; but no means of relief occurred, except by starving out the garrison. Sometimes, to disburthen them-



selves of so many useless mouths, a pass was given by General Gage to families to quit the city; but when they did, they were not permitted to bring away any, even the least of their effects; even their persons were often rigorously searched. The writer of these sheets is acquainted with several aged females now living, who were among those permitted to escape; and who succeeded in burying some of their valuables in the cellar, where they afterwards found them, although the house had been nearly demolished, and one or two who brought off a number of gold pieces hemmed into their garments, but in some cases the search was so rigid that even this could not be done. Boston was however at length released from its thralldom, and the suffering, starving, and pillaged inhabitants once more at liberty. Gen. Washington marched into it with the American forces the same day, carrying provisions and comforts in abundance. Nothing could surpass the enthusiasm with which the inhabitants greeted them; and "thus ended the contest at that place."

Arrangements were now to be made for a removal to the interior, and in anticipation of this event a new army had been organized on the preceding January. Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, Lt. Colonel Cornell, and Major Israel Angell, were the field officers in the regiment to which Captain Olney was attached. Captain Angell returned to his home sick, and resigned his commission. Coggeshall Olney was promoted to Captain, and the subject of this memoir, Stephen Olney, promoted to first Lieutenant. James Bridges, a very respectable young man from Andover, Mass. was appointed 2d Lieutenant.

Paper money at this time was in good repute. It had not began to depreciate, as it afterwards did; but it now began to be more difficult about

procuring enlistments. The prospect of an end of the war now became distant, and, alas! the success was doubtful, and the patriotism of many had begun to wax cold. A part of the soldiers, however, belonging to the first corps, re-enlisted, so that, as Captain Olney says, "they kept up the name of an army."

Soon after the evacuation of Boston, they were ordered to New-York. At Providence, they halted, and Captain Olney obtained leave to visit and stay one night with his family. This he says "was the first favor of the kind since I engaged in the army, and previous to this, I had never been from home more than 24 hours at a time in my life."

After a tedious march overland to New-York, the Rhode-Island regiment was stationed on Long Island, at Brooklyn Heights, half a mile from the city, just across the river. Here they were steadily employed in erecting fortifications on the island, destined to be of no service. The island was often annoyed by small parties of British, scouting about and robbing the luckless inhabitants of whatever they could lay hands upon. Captain Olney was one of a party despatched one night to look after some of these fellows, and had the good fortune to apprehend some seven or eight of them. A part of them got intelligence and made off quick enough to save themselves. Captain Olney's prisoners proved to be persons of "mature age, good sense, and very considerable information," and he expressed his amazement that "such persons should doubt the justice of the patriot cause, and still more astonishing that they avowed their belief that the States had not the means of supporting their independence." In after life, he says it appeared no wonder they should

have doubted the latter, so perfectly unprepared were the undisciplined forces of the States.

A most interesting event occurred while on this station—the reading of the Declaration of Independence. How many thousands listened to this soul-reviving appeal on that day ! In the shire towns and cities it was read from the balconies of the State-houses. On Long-Island the army was called out and it was read to them on the Beach. It was in fact America's proudest day—the day to her “for which all other days were made.” How beat the loyal hearts ! How swelled the patriotic bosoms, when America, for the first time, avowed her determination before the whole world, “never to lay down her arms until these United States should be free, sovereign, and independent !” Hear, oh heaven ! and be astonished, oh earth ! A nation in its infancy dares to throw off the yoke of bondage ! A nation that has only a few raw and undisciplined soldiers, offers to cope with the most powerful kingdom in Europe—with a war-like and a war-trained people—a people of old, mighty in arms, great in arts, and seeking to extend her dominion from sea to sea and from shore to shore ! America, with a line of seacoast altogether undefended, against a mighty naval armament, and a huge and impenetrable forest in her rear filled with avaricious and blood-thirsty savages, whom the least bribe would at once turn upon her with the merciless scalping knife and the exterminating tomahawk; without the alliance or countenance of any other nation, the solemn appeal was made, relying wholly on the justice and righteousness of her cause. What shout is that, that seems to rend the sky ? that comes booming over the waters, swelling on the waves, and sweeping over the shores of Manhattan, until all the little islands around seem to catch the glad tidings,

and echo back the joyful notes? What motley assemblage is that collected on the beach, who throw their hats high in air, and brandish their gleaming blades? It is liberty's last hope. It is the little band of heroes, who have commenced the regeneration of a world. The first who have dared to assert the dignity of man; who have scorned the worship of the golden calf; and have determined to call no man master on earth; none lord but the Lord Jehovah. The shout that they send up this day, shall be heard through all the earth; the distant hills shall prolong the echo on every side; the waves of the ocean shall bear it to every land; and nations yet unborn, shall arise and call them blessed; the captive in his dungeon shall think on them and all the oppressed of the earth shall "pray, looking towards this place."

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### CHAPTER III.

THE tide of joy, like all other tides, has an ebb. So elated were the little band on Long-Island, that they lay down with light hearts that night, and Captain Olney records that he dreamed, after coming off guard, that night, and falling asleep in his marquee, that a British vessel came into the harbor of New-York, and struck her sails in honor of General Washington. He awoke, he says, and "considered it was but a dream, but beheld in about two hours a British frigate, the first that had ever made the attempt, set sail, and ran by New-



York, up to Tarytown Cove, notwithstanding the fire from all our batteries, and received but little damage," to the great mortification of the company who found themselves much deceived about the strength of their batteries. But this was nothing to what followed.

Never perhaps during the whole war of the revolution, was there an American force on any station, that ought to have watched with greater vigilance the movements of the enemy than that now encamped on Long-Island; unfortunately General Greene, who had been put in command there was taken sick, and had to return home, so that the command devolved upon General Sullivan, or rather he was succeeded by him. General Sullivan was a man of undoubted honor and trust, and his character was beyond the reach of suspicion, but it must be evident to every one who reads that there was a terrible mismanagement somewhere. An army said to be 23,000 strong, was lying just without Sandy Hook, and waiting only for an unguarded moment to land their forces. The frigate that Captain Olney mentions, which run by the guns of so many forts, ought to have been a sufficient warning, if they had no other. A small detachment was stationed on Governor's Island, and another at Paulus Hook, in front of New-York, and upon the right bank of the Hudson. The American troops (the main body of the army) were in the city commanded by General Washington in person. General Putnam was on Long-Island, his head quarters on Brooklyn Heights, and Brigadier General Sterling, Lord Sterling as he was generally called, and many other officers of inferior rank, who afterwards distinguished themselves highly in the war for independence, were there.

Whether the British thought to divert attention from their movements, by keeping up the show of



negotiation, is uncertain, but it is certain it had some effect in lulling attention. It was at this time that a letter from Lord Howe to *George Washington, Esq.*, caused so much indignation in the American camp. General Washington himself returned it with scorn, and refused to receive any letter in which his rank was not specified, very properly observing, "that in his private capacity, he could not treat with them." To this point, then, their high mightinesses were obliged to come, or drop the negotiation at once ; accordingly, Adjutant-Gen. Patterson, was sent in due form with another letter. Washington observed in the first place, he was not authorized to negotiate with the British in any way ; and secondly, he could not see that the commissioners were clothed with any authority except to grant *pardons*, and "the United States having committed no offence, required no pardon at their hands; that she had only been defending her unquestionable rights," an answer that ought to be recorded in letters of gold, for the benefit of every people in succeeding ages, struggling for liberty. Patterson, after expressing much regret, withdrew. Here then was an end to *even the show of negotiation*, and all eyes ought to have been directed to their movements. But it is useless to look back or mourn over the 3000 Americans who fell or were taken prisoners, in that disastrous night and day, when the British surprised the forces at Brooklyn. It is useless, as it was then, to stop to mourn over the flower of Maryland, the entire regiment of whom consisting of brave and educated young men, of some of the most patriotic and best families in the province, which were totally cut to pieces *from the mistakes of a night*.

In silence and security the British made their dispositions of attack, and soon after dark, succeeded in effecting a landing between the villages

of Gravesend and New Utrecht, unseen and unopposed. This place is directly on the west coast of Long Island, and opposite Staten Island, and near the narrows, and was only three miles from the American encampment. General Sullivan had been in New-York on the preceding day, but had returned on that evening, Captain Olney states, bringing over 3000 men; and this 3000 by his account took their station somewhat in advance of the fort.

The two armies were separated by a chain of hills, then covered with wood, called the Heights of Guan, and which running from east and west, divide the island into two parts. There were three grand passes through these hills, one of which, near the narrows, and passing by the village of Flatbush, seemed to have been the most dangerous, and in the event the most fatal to the Americans. Upon the summit of these hills there is a road leading the whole length of the range, from Bedford to Jamaica. All along upon this road posts had been stationed, and within such a distance from each other, that the most prompt intelligence could be conveyed of what was passing on these routes.

Stephen Olney, who was sent on with a detachment in advance, lay all night within a mile of this force of 23,000 men, and knew not that they were in the neighborhood.

Two hours before day, Gen. Clinton commenced his attack; he led the vanguard of the enemy, which consisted of light infantry; Lord Percy the centre, consisting of grenadiers, the artillery, and cavalry; and Cornwallis, the rear guard, regiments of infantry and heavy artillery. Colonel Miles who commanded the foremost post, did not perceive or know of their approach until they were within half a mile; and they were warned by one of the

patriots being seized and made prisoner by the advance guard under General Clinton; in fact the three passes were at once in their power. General Clinton learning from his prisoner that the road of Jamaica was not guarded, occupied it without loss of time, and on his left bore towards Bedford, and seized an important defile which the Americans had incautiously left unguarded. History says, "from this moment the success of the day was decided in favor of the English." In short, by marching and countermarching, the Americans were at length almost completely surrounded; prodigies of valor were enacted by the enraged and betrayed patriots of America; many were wounded on the enemy's side, and about 400 killed. General Washington himself came over from New-York in the height of the engagement, and seeing some of his best troops slaughtered or taken, is said to have wrung his hands, and uttered an expression of anguish, never heard from him before. The sun of the 27th of August rose with that red and angry glare, which is the sure precursor of a violent storm, which quickly followed the battle; but to the superstitious, a dismal foreboding of the events of the day. Alas! it rose and set in blood.

In another part of this immense field of battle, the militia of New-York and Pennsylvania was making a brave stand against the forces under Lord Percy, and were about giving way at length, when General Parsons arrived to their relief, and renewed the combat, maintaining his position against fearful odds, until General Sterling came to his relief with 1500 men; the action in that quarter became extremely warm, and neither would give way. While the Hessians on their post were fighting the main body in the centre,

commanded by General Sullivan, the Americans defended themselves with the greatest gallantry, not knowing that all their efforts must prove unavailing, until the approach of the English light infantry assured them of it. They then endeavored to effect a retreat to the camp of Putnam; but attacked front and rear, it was no easy task; several regiments at length animated by heroic valor, cut their way through the midst of the British army and gained the camp in safety; others threw themselves into the wood, and escaped that way.

And where was the hero of our story, all this time? Why, he was with the regiment that was ordered on picquet guard, and lay that night preceding the battle, on their arms, in a wood within one mile of the enemy. "The ground being covered with wood, we were not exactly apprized of our situation," says he. Between him and the forts, on the right and left, the ground was occupied by Lord Sterling. It was not until day light that this division was attacked, and the first they knew, the firing commenced simultaneously in their front and rear. The firing at first, was from left to right. "We perceived," he says, "we were surrounded, but as yet saw no enemy; Lieutenant Colonel Cornell (I believe Colonel Hitchcock was not present) ordered Capt. Tew's platoon, to which I belonged, to move in front, to protect our sentries, and marched the regiment towards our forts where the firing continued. When they came in sight of the enemy, they were necessitated to fight or run their way through." The latter it seems was decided on, and these brave fellows, with some killed and others wounded, gallantly forced their way through and gained the fort of Gen. Putnam. "Many who hid in the woods came into camp after night," but to return



to Capt. Tew's platoon : " he marched a little distance in front, but as the firing continued in our rear, he thought proper to detach me, with about 20 men, in front, to protect the sentries, and he marched after, and shared the fate of his regiment, the fate of those who fell on the sword of the enemy. I marched forward, and found the enemy firing their field pieces, and some small arms, into the woods, where our sentries were placed, but the balls seemed to make the most havoc in the tops of the trees. I placed my men behind the trees, to be in readiness, if the enemy advanced, believing we were too far off for small arms, but my men thought they could kill, and kept up a deliberate fire.

We had been thus situated about half an hour, when the firing ceased in the rear, and I discovered a party of the enemy coming towards us in that direction; I formed my men, and marched off in very quick time towards our home, (fort,) believing the enemy were between us and the forts. I cautioned my men not to hurry, as the greatest exertion would be necessary at the end of the race; in about two miles, we came out of the woods into a field beside the road which led by a school house, by which we must pass to get over the mill-dam to our fort; at this place Lieutenant Thomas Hughes joined me with a small party; on getting over the fence into the road, I saw the enemy as near the school house as we were, drew up in line ever so long, deliberately viewing our works; I told my Sergeant Pollin to fix his bayonet, as we must go through here, or die. At this instant, the enemy saw us, and ran ahead, and fired, and more ran before them and fired to prevent our passage. Nevertheless, I made out to get nearly all my men past the school house, and part of Hughes's; after passing the enemy, about



one hundred yards, they had huddled together in the road. I ordered my men to face about, and give them one well-directed fire, which I saw from the staggering, had taken good effect." They then continued this running fight to Flatbush, and finally got into the fort in safety. I remark," Captain Olney continues, "about 2400 were taken prisoners, and 500 killed and wounded," making it 100 less than the official account of the battle states.

"At the time, I did not, he says, pretend to know or examine the generalship of posting Sullivan's and Sterling's forces, as they were, leaving the forts but poorly manned with sick and invalids. It must be on the supposition that the enemy would come on the direct road, and if our troops were overpowered, they might retreat to and defend the fort. But the enemy took a circuitous route, and where it was said Colonel —— (Hitchcock probably,) had neglected to guard, and arrived in our rear without notice. Had it been left to the British Generals to make a disposition of our troops, it is a chance if they would have made it more advantageous to themselves, and but from their tardiness they might have taken our main fort. All that seemed to prevent it was a scarecrow row of palisades from the fort to low water in the cove, which Major Box had ordered set up that morning. After we got into our fort, hungry, tired and sleepy, to augment our distress, there came on a dreadful heavy storm, with thunder and lightning, and the rain fell in such torrents that the water was soon ankle deep in the fort. Yet with all these inconveniences, and a powerful enemy just without musket shot, our men could not be kept awake. They would sit down and fall asleep, although Lieut. Cornell, a faithful and vigilant officer, whom they used to

nickname "Old Snarl," was threatening to make daylight shine through them all the time."

Thus ended the melancholy tragedy of the battle of Long-Island; through all its beautiful vallies from Bedford to Jamaica, the turf was strewed with the dead and the dying : imagination paints the scene, redolent of horrors. The dying warrior alone and unattended, sighing for some friendly hand to close his eyes, or place the cup of water to his parched lips, while his life is slowly ebbing from the ghastly wound. The frantic maiden, searching through the cold and drenching shower for the body of a husband or a father, unconscious of the thunder's roll, or lightning's flash, the wail of the dying mingled with the hoarse voice of the storm, or the roar of the ocean lashed into fury by the tempest. Alas, how many who hailed with enthusiasm the opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the cause of their country at the rising of that day's sun, lived not to see its setting; low in the dust, the lofty plume of the warrior is trodden, dimmed is the eagle eye, and pale the once glowing cheek, powerless the arm, that perchance mowed down the ranks of the enemies of his country, at the battle of Bunker Hill, or on the shores of Virginia. How are the mighty fallen. But they fell in the sacred cause of freedom. They were martyrs, who came up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Their blood has consecrated the cause, and the soil. In after ages the voyager as he passes the Narrows, shall point to the place where the Lord commanded a sacrifice on the altar of Liberty. Henceforth shall this be a chosen spot ; the dews of heaven shall fall gently on the sod, and the sweetest flowers of the forest shall blossom on the turf that covers the "*Flower of Maryland.*"

## CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY says that the "rain continued to fall in torrents for two days and two nights without intermission, by which the arms and ammunition of the soldiers was materially damaged," but providentially by this means the British ships could not come up to the assistance of their army, and the Americans had time to commence their retreat from the Island. A council of war being called, they decided it was best to evacuate their position without delay, as the British, once masters of the east river, they would be completely hemmed in. The dispositions therefore for removal having been made in silence, as far as practicable, they commenced their march at 8 o'clock in the evening. The greatest caution had to be used for too surely they knew, that notwithstanding their own mistakes in the affair of the battle, treachery was at the bottom of it; that there were many loyalists on the Island, how many they did not know, who had probably acted as spies and informers, and even guides on that occasion.

In managing the retreat, Colonel Glover commanded the vessels and fleet and transport boats, General M'Dougal was charged with the embarkation, and Colonel Mifflin was to cover the rear guard. The current was exceedingly rough, and the wind contrary, and indeed in a direction (north east) calculated to blow them right into the hands of their enemies, but providentially, just as they embarked, the wind changed to north west, and they got safely off, under the protection of a thick fog, which covered Long-Island, and singularly

enough reached not to New-York. Washington, notwithstanding the entreaties of his officers, remained last upon the shore ; he would not embark until he saw the last man on board. They amounted in all to 9000.

It was not until the sun was high in the heavens, on the next morning, that the British perceived their prey had escaped, and with all their stores, munitions of war, &c., were safe from pursuit; a few boats of the rear guard were alone to be seen, retreating from the Island, where they had returned to take away some articles which had been left the night before : they were out of their reach. Never was a retreat better timed or conducted with more ability and prudence.

“ We had to take our baggage, camp equipage, &c. on our shoulders, says Captain Olney, and carry them to the boats,” and tedious indeed was the operation, through mud and mire, and not a ray of light visible, for this indulgence would at once have betrayed them, and through a fog so intense, you might almost grasp it. The Captain and his company were soon however in more comfortable quarters, and where they could venture to breathe freely, though not eating the bread of idleness : a great operation was yet to be performed ; that was to remove the forces on Governor’s Island, and get them to the same place of safety. Two regiments occupied that Island, and with abundance of munitions of war, and a numerous artillery. The Americans had fortified it to defend the east river, but it could not be expected to be of any avail, after the loss of Long-Island; the object was effected, and the whole safely removed to New-York.

Dreadful for the time, was the effect of this battle to the patriot cause ; they had hitherto labored under a great mistake, in supposing that personal



valor alone would supply the want of discipline. Upon this they wholly relied, and now by a very natural reaction, fell into the other extreme, and supposed that courage would do nothing; besides they began to be apprehensive of treachery, and dreaded an ambuscade at every step. The militia, armed suddenly in emergency, became every day more intractable, and deserted by hundreds; their example became every day more fatal to the regular troops, who at the most were only enlisted for one year, and who now took the liberty to suppose they might return to their homes just when they pleased.

But there is no trial without a salutary use, if rightly improved. Hitherto the Congress had resisted all intreaties for a regular army, so great was the jealousy of the nation of a *standing army*, but now the remonstrances of Washington were seconded by all the military officers of distinction, and they at length yielded, and decreed that a regular army should be immediately raised, to consist of eight battalions, in which the soldiers should be enlisted to serve through the war, with a promise of a grant of land of one hundred acres at the end of it, and a bounty of twenty dollars at enlisting. They were afterwards obliged to modify it and allow enlistments for three years, but no land, if they served less than through the war. With much exertion Washington made out to keep his little army together, until proper measures could be taken to organize a new one. Advice, persuasion, and exhortation were necessarily used, and, seconded by the other officers, the greater part yielded to his authority and consented to remain. Personal affection for that great commander (for ever blessed be his memory) was thought to have had great influence.

It was at this time that General Howe, pre-

suming upon the events of the late battle, sent to Congress a request to treat with them, in order to put an end to the war, as he said. The request was sent by General Sullivan, and Congress deputed three of their body to hear what Howe had to say, and to examine his powers. Nothing could have proved his hollow and hypocritical intentions more than the language made use of at this interview did. They demanded "first that the colonies should return to their allegiance," with the assurance—*assurance* forsooth, "that it was the earnest desire of the King to make his government easy and agreeable to them, and that the laws of Parliament, which were so obnoxious to them, should undergo a *revisal*, and the instructions to Governors should be reconsidered"—*reconsidered* probably, as the Constitution of Lower Canada has been. If nothing had ever chanced to inform us of what our favor would have been, had we trusted to these *assurances*, the groaning prisons of Toronto and Montreal could answer us now. Whether the gallows formed a part of the camp equipage of the British commanders of those days, as it is said to of some at the north now, is not known, but we have no reason to suppose that we should have fared any better than those unfortunate men who have recently laid down their arms in Canada, upon the *assurances* of British clemency.

The three Commissioners, Franklin, Rutledge, and Adams, saw through their hollow *assurances*, and made the conference short. During this time however a fortnight of rest had been allowed the troops at New-York, except in the little skirmishes that would naturally take place from the near contiguity of the enemy. By degrees they got possession of most of the little islands in the neighborhood, and General Washington thought it most prudent to evacuate New-York. In this he was

opposed in a council of war by the other officers, who thought that "if they could hold out a show of resistance there it would divert the attention of the enemy from any other point, as the season was so far advanced it might prevent their obtaining a foothold until winter should set in, which would oblige them to withdraw for one season at least. Circumstances afterwards demonstrated that the plan of Washington was best. At length, however, seeing the enemy reinforced from so many quarters, they unanimously decided it was best. The sick, the baggage, and munitions of war were safely carried over to Jersey, far up the river, and the soldiers marched out of the city, when, behold, information came that the British had landed on the island at Kip's Bay, only three miles from the city. This caused them to decamp with so much haste as to leave part of their heavy artillery in the hands of the enemy. At King's bridge they had a strong force, and hither they retreated. From their near neighborhood to the enemy, frequent skirmishes ensued, in which the American army became accustomed to face the foe. At Harlem, they had quite a hot engagement, in which Lieut. Stephen Olney fought and behaved with much gallantry. The particulars of this engagement have been given in history, except, that the Americans contrived an ambuscade, into which many British and Hessians fell, and numbers of them were killed or taken prisoners.

It was while they were at Harlem, and only a few days after the capture of New-York, that the great fire occurred at that city. One fourth of New-York was consumed. The British accused the Americans of setting fire to the city themselves, in order to deprive them of its spoils. It was in vain that they protested their entire innocence. Their protestations were not regarded,

and humanity weeps over the recital, they seized upon many whom they pretended to believe were instrumental in it, and plunged them headlong into the flames ! Yes, in the very faces of their imprisoned families, in view of the destruction of all their property ! What must have been the feelings of those bereaved and houseless beings to see their last props torn away ; and still more horrible, hurried by a death of excruciating torture, without a moment for preparation, into the presence of their God. Oh, England ! thy day of retribution has not yet come. That thou art a *christian nation* will only aggravate thy doom. In the Judgment, Turks and infidels shall stand guiltless at thy side, and the time may come when it shall be said, “Blessed is he that taketh thy children, and dasheth them against the stones.”

Captain Olney saw not this, he was at this time near King’s bridge, skirmishing with the outposts of the enemy, and lending his aid to help keep the men together, and to inspire them with courage. He says that “when they retreated from New-York city, they had a running fight, very similar to that at Flatbush.” The regiment to which he belonged, after some days was obliged to go over to fort Lee, on the Jersey side; and here, he relates a conversation between two Captains of his regiment which certainly was very singular ; to say nothing more of it in presence of witnesses, too. They held an argument it seems, upon the probability of the country’s success in gaining their independence, and very gravely decided that it was impossible, and that they never could effect it. Captain Olney says it was true they were older and had more experience than himself, but he did not hesitate to avow a contrary opinion; he speaks of a Mr. Bridges, who likewise spoke on the occa-



sion, and boldly asserted his full belief in the future independence of his country.

The stay of Captain Olney was short at fort Lee; he with the regiment, was ordered to recross it, and encamp at Harlem Heights, near Hellgate. The enemy erected a battery on the opposite side of the east river, and a regular cannonade was kept up every day. It was now judged best to send the sick off to a place of safety; and Captain Olney was despatched to conduct them to Tappan, which was safely performed. During his absence he says their regiment had another skirmish with the enemy, but being outflanked, retreated without much loss; and as the enemy advanced on Long Island side, the American army made retrograde movements on the north river side, to keep from being outflanked. The object of the British now, was to surround the American army, and being at this time reinforced by an Irish regiment, after various manœuvres they determined to effect an encampment on White Plains, on the other side of Kingsbridge.

Washington penetrated the designs of the enemy, and resolved to frustrate them by extending his own army to that place; and finally encamped the main body at White Plains; separated from the English only by a narrow river (Brunx). Here for some days, they had frequent skirmishes, until the whole British army had concentrated themselves on the opposite bank of the river; a cannonade commenced, but with little effect. The right wing of the army was severely attacked by the British, and defended with much bravery, particularly, by a regiment from Maryland, and one from New-York, who came out of the lines after the enemy had crossed over and fought them at the foot of the mountain until overpowered by numbers: they were forced to retire behind the redoubts.

Night coming on, the main body under Washington was not attacked; he took advantage of the night to strengthen his position, and it was a night of hard work; but so formidable did they appear in the morning, that General Howe decided on not attacking them until he could get some battalions from New-York, under the command of Lord Percy. These reinforcements did not arrive until evening, and he had to wait another day for the assault.

It seemed the fate of Captain Olney, to be wherever danger was and much work to do, and he was not to repose in idleness; a more busy or anxious time perhaps did not occur during the campaign. Captain Olney thought there was about twenty two thousand on each side, before Percy's force joined the enemy; but history records that the forces of the enemy were much superior, and regular troops; while the force of the Americans were mostly raw militia. Another night of excessive rain which continued all through the next day, obliged both sides to remain quiet. It was now the 30th of October, and the morning of the 1st of November was decided by the British, for a general engagement. With such an immense reinforcement as they had now received, it was well understood the Americans would be unable to resist.

Washington, who saw and understood all their movements, decided with his usual prudence, and resolved to break up his camp. Accordingly, after setting fire to the houses of White Plains and the neighborhood, and to their forage, he effected the removal of his whole army in the night, to a very mountainous place in the vicinity of North Castle, and, behold, in the morning they were gone. The English took possession of their camp, very wise-

ly deciding not to follow the American army any further, but to confine their attempts to reduce the remaining forts and fortresses near New-York.

Contrary to the advice of Washington, the Americans had decided on returning to forts Washington and Lee. Fort Washington, it will be recollected, had to surrender, after a most gallant defence, in which the English had about eight hundred killed, principally of their German soldiers. This fort, under the command of Colonel Magaw, a very brave officer, had to surrender with about 2600 men. They capitulated, however, on honorable terms, and that only after having expended all their ammunition.

Captain Olney estimates the prisoners at 2300, and was excessively angry at the surrender. He says, "if the fort was well provided and capable of defence, Colonel Magaw must have acted the part of a coward or a traitor; if on the contrary it was not capable of defence, it was bad generalship to attempt it; and, moreover, that the troops might have removed at short notice to fort Lee, on the Jersey shore." As to Colonel Magaw, it is evident he was no coward or traitor, but as respects his prudence in attempting to defend the fort with such a scant supply of ammunition, or even to defend it at all, it may well be questioned. Fort Lee was then invested, and wisely abandoned by the Americans, but unfortunately in such haste as to leave much of their military stores and baggage in the power of the enemy; their tents too, the loss of which they most severely felt at this season, were mostly left.

The Americans now had to retire on the other side of the Hackensac river, while the British could penetrate into the very heart of New-Jersey. Under all these discouragements, most of the Americans sunk the militia, disbanded and precipitately

retired to their habitations, and history says that even the regular troops deserted in parties. The army of Washington at this time scarcely amounted to 3000, and without instruments to intrench themselves, without tents to shelter them, and surrounded by a population of doubtful sentiments, it is no wonder that a feeling of discouragement should prevail. It is due to the character of Captain Stephen Olney to say that he was not one who ever despaired or murmured in the worst of times. Even here, exposed to much suffering as they were, he neither repined or desponded, but continually cheered his forlorn companions, and bade them hope for better times; while he sat an example worthy of all imitation, when turning his back upon the more civilized country he had left, and marching, he scarce knew whither. The feelings of the Commander-in-Chief, he reflected, must have been trying in the extreme, and needed no additional infliction. He had defended the ground inch by inch, and had the mortification after all, to see the fairest and best portion of the country fall into the hands of an overbearing and sanguinary enemy. Behind, as they approached the Hackensack, rolled the beautiful Hudson; its fine forts, late in their possession, now displaying the flag of the victors; the island of Manhattan on every height gleaming with British arms. While below, the city, with its tall spires, its fine buildings and ample resources, was now a prey to the enemy. True, a fourth part of that beautiful city was now but a blackened pile of ruins; the conflagration had been descried by the American army, but the horrible detail had not yet reached them; still, it must have been with feelings of melancholy interest, with a bosom swelling with unutterable emotion, that the gallant commander of the American army turned his



back upon the city ; yesterday he was the leader of at the least 22,000 men ; and before the fatal battle of Brooklyn, of many thousand more ; to-day, where are they ? Death, imprisonment and desertion ! The soldiers still remaining with him, completed their term this year ; and to add to the difficulties, an insurrection appeared ready to explode in this very province of New-Jersey, where the friends of the British taking courage from the calamities of the Americans, were ready for a muster. The Commander-in-Chief was obliged to send on a part of his little army, however illy they could be spared, to check it.

It was at this time that the two Howes issued their famous proclamation, offering free pardon to all who came within sixty days to tender their submission ; and to the disgrace of the country and of human nature, great numbers flocked to confess their political sins to the representative of Majesty, and to obtain pardon. It was observed, that these consisted of the very rich and the very poor, while the middling class held their constancy. Washington, though sorely grieved at this declension, it is said, “never lost the serenity of his countenance.” Captain Olney remarks, “that through this march of the Jerseys, “the enemy continued to harass their rear, and were within less than an hour’s march of them, all the time.” General Lee, who had been sent to the upper waters of the Hudson, in order to be ready to succor the corps of Canada, which opposed Gen. Carlton on the lakes, was now sent for in haste, to go to the rescue of Pennsylvania ; the critical situation of Philadelphia demanding, in Washington’s opinion, the first consideration. He demanded reinforcements from Pennsylvania immediately, and also called on the Governor of New-Jersey for the

militia of that Province ; both of these authorities remained *in statu quo*.

Gen. Lee was ordered to join the commander-in-chief at Bristol, Pennsylvania, and the Rhode-Island regiment was to go on with him; Washington apprehensive of being locked in between two rivers, west of the Passaic river, took up his quarters at Newark. The English pushed on after him ; he then crossed the Raritan, and took post at New-Brunswick. At this place, the Maryland and New-Jersey militia declared their term of service had expired, and retired to their homes.—Some corps of the Pennsylvania militia followed their example. It was soon after this, that the army had a miraculous escape in the famous retreat to Trenton, and on the 8th of December, when they so successfully defeated the chase of the enemy by crossing the Delaware, having first cut the bridges, broken the roads, and removed all the ferry boats ; they had no sooner gained the opposite side than the British appeared in sight on the other side. But to return to Captain Olney, if any one had a yearning desire to return home, he had ; his first child was born on the 19th of the preceding October, and he had never seen the face of kindred but once since he first enlisted in the war ; yet he resolved to keep at his post. He realized all the danger that menaced the country at that time, yet unshrinkingly determined to share peril and fatigue ; and here he relates the circumstance of the capture of their commander, General Lee, who when near Morristown took up his quarters for the night at a place called Bearskin Ridge, about three or four miles from the encampment, in a direction, where he says we might expect the enemy, who got intelligence of him, and with a party of light horse surprised and made him pris-

oner. Wholly by his imprudence, he adds, and with dejected spirits, we pursued our march next day, under the command of General Sullivan, who altered our route to the right, to avoid the enemy, and passed the Delaware at Eastown, 50 or 60 miles above Bristol, making about three days' march more than by the direct road. In the mean time the commander-in-chief, through means of Generals Mifflin and Armstrong, had procured a reinforcement of the army from Pennsylvania, who finding their capital menaced, at length began to stir themselves. General Gates was then ordered to bring promptly the best of the troops he had in Canada, to the rescue. He arrived the 20th of December, and doubtless infused new life into the troops; meanwhile, the corps to which Capt. Olney belonged were delayed, from different causes; in the first place through the unaccountable supineness of General Lee, before the army had the good fortune to lose him to the British. They did not arrive until the 27th.

A dispute immediately arose among the British respecting the treatment of Gen. Lee: the Americans offered to ransom him with ten Hessian officers, but the British positively refused to exchange him without one of equal rank, and even insisted upon considering him as a prisoner of *State* instead of war. The exasperated Americans immediately determined on reprisals, and Congress ordered Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, and five Hessian officers to be imprisoned and treated as General Lee was; this was done, and they were not liberated until Lee was. During this period, information reached the American camp of the situation of the American prisoners at New-York. "They were shut up in churches, and other places, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, not allowed sufficient nourishment, even of the most sor-

did and repulsive kind, exposed to the insults of the soldiers, a shocking want of cleanliness : nothing alleviated their sufferings, a confined and impure air engendered mortal diseases, and more than 1500 of those brave men perished in a few weeks ; all the time the officers of the king persuading them to enlist in the royal cause, but they all refused preferring certain death to the desertion of their country ; the officers fared no better, destitute even of decent clothing, they were escorted about street to be the sport of the royal mob, and even beaten for daring to solicit some relief for their suffering soldiers, who were perishing for food and in the infected dungeons." Howe denied this to General Washington, who offered to send an agent to provide for their wants, but this they would not permit, and this, all dreadful as it was, probably did more for the cause of independence than any thing else. What was only patriotism and love of country in the Americans before, was now downright hatred. It seems incredible, but such was the fact, that afterwards when, by reason of the many prisoners in the hands of the Americans, they were glad to exchange, such had been their treatment, many died as soon as they attempted to remove them. The English insisted that their prisoners should be restored even for the dead ; that is, that a living body should be given them for every dead prisoner !!! the Americans, horror struck as they were, refused with much spirit.



## CHAPTER V.

THE corps to which Captain Olney belonged, in making an exchange of commanders, had certainly become the gainers. Gen. Sullivan was prompt; he crossed the Delaware at Phillipsburgh; and this reinforcement swelled the army to about seven thousand. It would have been much larger, but singularly enough, on the same day that Washington had crossed the Delaware, the English became possessed of Rhode-Island; consequently, the reinforcements that General Lincoln had assembled to reinforce Washington, were detained for the protection of Massachusetts. Connecticut too, dared not send her forces as the enemy were constantly scouring the Sound, and they knew not where the next point of attack might be. It was at this time, too, that the merciless savages of the wilderness were by bribes and promises, induced to take up arms against the Americans, and the ruin of the Cherokee nation was occasioned by this. The inhabitants of the States were living at peace with them, but were now obliged in Virginia, in the Carolinas, and Georgia, to turn their arms against them; and as far as possible, to make it a war of extermination. It would be well for those who are continually whining about *the poor Indians*, particularly the Cherokees, to look back and see what ruined them as a nation.

The winter had set in, and the Delaware was fast closing over, and every thing wore a discouraging appearance. True, some late additions had been made to the American army; true, our ministers were despatched to almost every court in

Europe, for aid—but, as yet, no tidings had arrived of their success. Any commander under the same discouragements, would have desponded. Washington, at this very period, contrived a plan to surprise a portion of the enemy's forces ; to act on the offensive, while they were supposing that the Americans would not long be able to act on the defensive. With great sagacity he observed they had extended their line of fortifications too far, and he contrived a plan to surprise the corps nearest the river, and too remote for succor. Our limits will not permit us to give the whole interesting story, which will be useless, too, it being so fully treated of in the History of the Revolution ; we shall, therefore, confine ourselves to general heads, giving such only, from history, as shall make the subject understood.

“I have given,” said Captain Olney to the author of this work, some time before his death, “rather an unconnected narrative ; there are many things essential to be mentioned, which it will be your business to supply, should you become possessed of my manuscript. Part of it is from memory, and I believe you will find it accurate ; but there will be much to be added from history to make it understood.”

It was the fate of Captain Olney to be absent at the time of this brilliant affair, by being transferred from his commander, General Sullivan, whom General Washington took with him, as well as General Greene, to assist him in conducting the first corps, who passed the Delaware nine miles above Trenton, at M'Konkey's ferry. The second division under the command of General Irvine, was to cross at Trenton ferry, only a mile from the village, in order to seize a bridge over the river of Assumpink, in order to intercept the enemy who would have to retreat that way after being

dislodged by Washington, from Trenton; while the third division, commanded by General Cadwallader, was to pass the river at Bristol and take post at Burlington. (This was the extreme point of their outposts, and within twenty miles of Philadelphia; so near that Congress had taken the alarm, and removed their sitting to Baltimore). The soldiers were exhorted to remember Brooklyn and New-York, and to wipe out the stains of their defeat in those places. They expected to have come upon the enemy before day; but a light rain having frozen and made it very slippery, they did not arrive until 8 o'clock the next morning. Unfortunately, the division under Irvine, as well as the third under Cadwallader, never reached the scene of action; not even crossed the Delaware; as they said the ice had accumulated so as to make it impossible to take over their artillery, to act with effect. Had they all got over, the probability is, the whole line of fortifications along the river would have been swept; as it was, the forces at Trenton were surrounded. The British General in command there, went out to give battle; but Rawle was killed the first fire; and his soldiers fled to the Princeton road; they were immediately intercepted by the Americans, and surrounded, and had to surrender. 1000 prisoners were taken, only 40 or 50 had been killed.

Washington, aware that the British could muster in a few hours an overwhelming force, and finding the two divisions were not likely to come to his support, very wisely re-embarked with his prisoners, and conveyed them to Philadelphia, where they were defiled through the streets of Philadelphia, followed by their arms and banners; and even as prisoners, it is said the black whiskered and mustachoeed fellows, in those days, excited terror.

Capt. Olney in speaking of his disappointment on that occasion, gives the following narration: "On the 25th of December at night, our army was in motion to attack the enemy at three positions, one at Trenton under Washington, one under General Cadwallader, to which our regiment belonged, at Burlington, and one under Irvine at Mount Holley; while marching from our encampment, a short distance, it began to snow; we made several halts by the river, as if some one was looking for a place to embark, but the word was we could not get over our artillery on account of the ice, and our division returned to camp, as did the other, General Irvine's. I had no experience of this sort, or any in navigation, but Col. Jeremiah Olney, of Providence, then a Captain, said, "*we ought to go without our artillery; this seemed to me correct, and those versed in military affairs must suppose there would be little use for artillery when our plan was to take the enemy by surprise, and what ought to have stimulated us to greater exertions, the fate of the other division might depend on ours.*" This was Capt. Jeremiah Olney's opinion, but he was of too low a grade to have a voice in the councils of that night, and perhaps it was well for us, and certainly better he adds (humorously) for the British, who after being apprised that General Washington had captured all their men, 900 in number, the remainder ran away safe to Brunswick." There are two things in the Captain's statement that may appear erroneous, but they are correct; one that 900 prisoners were taken: there were only 900 Hessians taken on the ground, but upon searching the houses 100 more were found, which made the thousand, that were carried to Philadelphia, also that all the men were taken as the Irishman said, and the rest ran away. Captain Olney is correct here also, it was



no Irishism, all the men in the place were taken, after the 40 or 50 killed ; but there was a foraging party out that morning, of 500 troops, who discovered on their return, the presence of the Americans in time to make their escape ; the assistance of Cadwallader's division, had he gone over, would have intercepted and secured them. As it was, the events of their discomforture were momentous. The Americans rushed to the standard of freedom once more, their army was very sensibly augmented in a few days. The enemy on the contrary, were proportionably alarmed ; the whole army put itself in motion ; Lord Cornwallis who was then on the point of embarking for England, from New-York, returned with the utmost expedition into New-Jersey. Colonel Donop retired precipitately to Princeton, by the way of Amboy, to unite with General Leslie, and even General Grant, who with the main body of the British army occupied New-Brunswick, retreated to Princeton to join the others. Washington upon finding his army augment, thought himself in a situation to attempt an expedition on the frontiers of New-Jersey ; he had immediately marched and took possession of Trenton, and now concentrated his forces there.

Captain Olney goes on to relate, "After this success our army passed into the Jerseys. Our regiment was several days at Crosswix, where General Mifflin made a harangue to the three regiments of Rhode-Island, which then composed nearly one half of the present army of General Washington, to induce them to stay one month longer than the time for which they were engaged. Our regiment, with one accord, agreed to stay to a man ; as did also the others, except a few who made their escape by the enemy at Trenton, the next day, and was not seen in the army afterwards." (Captain Olney forgot that they were

offered, and accepted a bounty of ten dollars a head, as one of their inducements to remain.) "The first of January, 1777, our Rhode-Island regiments marched from Crosswix to Trenton, where we arrived about sunrise, having been all night travelling eleven miles, owing to the badness of the road ; we took quarters in the houses and began to prepare for breakfast ; but before it was ready, the drum beat to arms, the enemy whom we supposed at Princeton, twelve miles off, or at Brunswick, twenty four miles off, were near at hand and double our number. Our troops paraded on the south side of a small river that passes through the town into the Delaware, (this must have been the Assumpinck) and soon marched with a view to take possession of an eminence the north side of the town, as I then supposed, to get into a better situation, so if we were obliged to retire to the north and hilly part of Jersey, we could get there with better safety ; but the enemy got possession of these hills before we did, and commenced a smart fire upon us. General Greene was at the head of our column, and gave the word, "retreat ;" the first platoon wheeled, some others turned about, as we had been taught on parade duty, so that we passed Trenton bridge in great disorder. Whenever the regiment and army formed in order, the men were at arm's length apart, so as to make a numerous and formidable appearance, (none but a Yankee would have thought of that.) Thus we remained until dark, without firing much, and but little from the enemy. A few scattering balls were passing each way, most of the time. It appeared to me then, that our army was in the most desperate situation I had ever known it ; we had no boats to carry us across the Delaware, and if we had, so powerful

an enemy would certainly destroy the better half before we could embark. To cross the enemy's line of march, between this and Princeton, seemed impracticable ; and when we thought of retreating into the south part of Jersey, where there was no support for an army, that was discouraging ; notwithstanding all this, the men and officers seemed cheerful, and in great spirits ; I asked Lieutenant Bridges what he thought now, of our independence. He answered cheerfully, ' I do n't know ; the Lord must help us. ' ”

We must stop one moment to admire the cheerfulness and composure of the soldiers in the most trying and critical situation. Cornwallis, who had marched with his vanguard toward Trenton, had unexpectedly arrived at about 4 o'clock in the morning. His rear guard was posted at the village of Maidenhead, about half way between this and Trenton, (consequently about six miles off,) and other regiments were on their march from New-Brunswick to reinforce his army. When the Americans retired behind the little river, (Assumpinck,) that Captain Olney mentions, they took good care to secure all the passes. The bridge and all the fords were carefully guarded. The English attempted to force the passes several times, but without success, and the Americans stood firm in their entrenchments until dark, when the cannonading ceased, and Cornwallis rested until morning, knowing his reinforcements would then come on, and meaning to march them to the assault. The whole American army must have seen their danger, but they seemed to feel too that the mighty mind of their commander was equal to the event, and it proved so.

Captain Olney says, “ After dark, we were dismissed a little while to get our breakfast, dinner, and supper. As the night advanced it became ex-

tremely cold, and it seemed to me extravagant that our men should pull down such good cedar fences to augment our fires, and they were replenished by some stragglers, as we afterwards understood, who were ordered for that purpose."

There seems to be some mystery here, who the stragglers were, whether deserters from the British camp, or some of the inhabitants of the province who had volunteered in this benevolent office, perhaps some of our readers may understand, but we confess we do not.

But we must leave these weary and heavy laden soldiers, to their short repose, and venture into the tent of the American commander. The servant may sleep sometimes, but the master scarce ever can. Here, in deep conclave, sat the earthly guardians of the army of independence. On the one hand was Gen. Greene, of Rhode-Island, with that singularly severe look which even in youth he bore, his closely compressed lips denoting the deep mental conflict he was engaged in ; and, as though in direct contrast, opposite was the gallant and elegant General Mercer, of Virginia, upon whose sunny brow no warning angel had written, "thou shalt die to-morrow !" beside him sat the stately General Mifflin, the favorite of Pennsylvania, together with the prudent Cadwallader and Irvine. Sullivan, too, was there, and some others of inferior note ; but high above the rest towered the majestic form of Washington, solemn but serene ; he was scarcely ever seen to smile and never to laugh. He stood like some oak that defies the tempest, and unfolded the plan which the exigence of the occasion had suggested. It was, to the amazement of all, to abandon all at once the banks of the Delaware, and carry the war into the very heart of New-Jersey ; that was—and who but he could have conceived it, surrounded, be-



leagured, and beset, by an army more than treble his number, to exchange a defensive for an offensive war. The boldness of the plan struck all present with admiration, and they had nothing to offer in opposition, but the word "Philadelphia."

The commander in chief proceeded to develope his views and the probable course of the hostile army, who fearing to be cut off from New-York, and likewise for their stores at New-Brunswick, would probably retire also from the river, and thus Philadelphia be saved, and a great part of New-Jersey preserved. "But at the worst, should the enemy, abandoning all else, succeed in crossing the river and actually become masters of Philadelphia, yet it would be better to lose Philadelphia without the army than to lose them both." There was an unction in the speech of our great father which none could resist ; but added to this, the argument was unanswerable. Each assented with full approbation, and grateful, no doubt, as mankind always are, that there was one able to take the labor of thinking and the responsibility of acting, off their hands ; each hastily departed to call out their respective regiments. The fires were renewed in the camp to deceive the enemy, preparations made, the baggage sent safely off, and the whole army, finding the enemy was perfectly quiet, set out on the road to Princeton, by Allentown, the longest way, but in order to shun an encounter with the reinforcements coming in on the other road. We will give Captain Olney's history of the march of the Rhode-Island regiment, in his own words.

"The roads which the day before had been mud, snow, and water, were congealed now, and had become hard as a pavement and solid, and our army was ordered to parade in silence, and leave those comfortable fires. The orders for our

march were given in so low a tone, that some of the Colonels were at a stand which way to move their regiments. After marching all night, at sunrise we found ourselves in the vicinity of Princeton, and a detachment of the British with field-pieces drawn up in order of battle, to receive us."

The Americans had taken especial care, not to be followed; the patrols were left on their rounds, the fires kept up, &c., and no suspicion entered the British camp that they had departed. The detachment which they now met, was three regiments which had lodged at Trenton, on the preceding night, and were now on their march for Maidenhead. The Americans suddenly appeared and charged them with great impetuosity. The English defended themselves so rigorously, that the militia faced about, and were retiring in disorder. The brave General Mercer, of Virginia, placed himself in the forefront of the battle and attempted to rally them, but fell in the attempt, mortally wounded—and again the militia turned their backs. But instantly the tide of war rolled back—"Washington, to the rescue," was enough to animate all hearts; followed by a select corps of the conquerors of Trenton, he rushed on with overwhelming force and restored the battle. The English regiments were separated and in the greatest confusion. The English Colonel Mawhood, after sustaining the assault a few moments, cut his way through with the bayonet, and followed by as many of his forces as could follow him, escaped to Maidenhead; the next made several ineffectual attempts to follow them, but were driven back and fled to New-Brunswick. The third followed them, except between 300 and 400, which were taken prisoners; over 100 were left dead on the ground. The loss of the Americans in slain, was

nearly equal, and among the number was the gallant Mercer, the compatriot in arms, the tried friend, the endeared companion of Washington. An hour before, he was blooming in life and urging on his men to the fight, while even more than the eloquence of the appeal, his own gallant bearing had influence. But few moments had the devoted chief to gaze on the inanimate form of his friend. Alas! the times brooked no delay. But to Capt. Olney's account again of the Rhode-Island regiment.

“When they came up with the British regiment, Colonel Hitchcock, he says, was sick and absent. Major Israel Angell, the only field officer present, made a short speech to the regiment, encouraging them to act the part that became brave soldiers, worthy of the cause for which we were contending. We then marched a short distance with a wood upon our right, and partly in front, and the first notice that I had of the enemy being so near, they, to the number of 30 or 40, fired a full volley on the front of the column composed of Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, who broke and came running through our ranks. This had like to have disordered our march, but Captain Jeremiah Olney, in a peremptory manner, ordered them to join our platoon. I was in this platoon, and I seconded the motion, *in earnest*, so that with some persuasion, and a few hard words, some ten or twelve of them complied, and the rest made off into the woods.

When clear of the woods and other obstructions, our column displayed and marched in line; at this instant the enemy made a full discharge of musketry and field-pieces, loaded with grape shot, which made the most horrible music about our ears I had ever heard, but as they overshot, there were but few but what continued the march, look-

ing well at the colors, which were carried steadily by ensign Oliver Jencks, of Cumberland, (no fool of a job to carry colors steady at such a time.) The enemy perceiving we were not all dead and that we continued to advance in order with a reserved charge for them, turned their backs and fled in disorder. We pursued them to Princeton College, where the 300 submitted as prisoners. By this time, our cannon, which we had left at the bridge, west of Princeton, began to play at the enemy we had left at Trenton, who having lost sight of us last night, were in pursuit of us this morning. From the time it took to secure the prisoners, I was fearful that both the contending armies would pass through the town together; but it happened ours got over first, and took the road to Millstone; theirs were at our heels, but they returned to their winter quarters at Brunswick.

“When at Princeton, we lamented very much the want of 400 or 500 fresh troops, to have proceeded to Brunswick to burn their winter provisions, magazines, &c. The two last nights’ march, the first through mud, snow and water, the last over frozen ground, with the hardships of the day, seemed to have nearly exhausted both men and officers—some of whom were almost as bad as barefoot. Though we were rather short of provisions no one complained, and we had been too busily engaged to think of hunger; and we rejoiced to find ourselves so much better situated than we were the preceding night at Trenton.”

It was during this battle that Captain Olney was so happy as to save the life of Colonel Monroe, afterwards President of the United States. He fell in endeavoring to rally the affrighted militia of Pennsylvania, in the beginning of the battle, and as they rushed through the ranks of the



Rhode-Island regiment, creating great disorder, Captain Jeremiah Olney stopped some of them and compelled them to form with their platoon, while Stephen Olney raised Colonel Monroe, and carried him to a place of safety, not dreaming that he bore in his arms the future President of the Union. This must have been the work of a moment, for he was very soon back again and fighting. It is singular that Captain Olney does not mention any thing of this in his narrative, but probably he considered it as irrelevant to the history of the battle. It is said that he never spoke of it except when questioned on the subject, and possibly thought it ostentatious to boast of an action resulting in mere humanity, in his own history.

The task of the army on this day, was no easy one ; the soldiers of the British camp came up to Princeton almost at the same time with Washington's rear guard, who found himself again in imminent danger ; the soldiers, who had taken no rest of consequence through the two preceding nights, were obliged to retreat from Princeton to the upper and mountainous regions of New-Jersey, destroying the bridges as they went, to prevent the pursuit of the enemy. They proceeded to occupy Pluckmin, where they had a breathing spell, and refreshed themselves until they could retire to Morristown, in upper Jersey. At this place Captain Olney completed his month, and feeling exceedingly anxious to see his family, left the army and returned to them for a season. Before he went, however, it was his lot to be sent out on a foraging party, where he had nearly got worsted. It was after they had become encamped at Morristown ; we shall relate it in his own words.

“To complete the extra month's service, I was in a detachment of about 300, under command of

Colonel Lippitt and Lieutenant Colonel Henshaw, as a patrol or scouting party. We left our encampment near Morristown, and proceeded to within 20 or 30 rods of the road, leading from Brunswick to Bonumtown, equidistant from each place, which was occupied by the enemy in great force ; a light horseman gave information there was an enemy near ; we made a halt to eat dinner side of the wood, which extended to the road.

When we had done dinner Captain Jeremiah Olney asked me, " if there were any sentries out ? " I replied, " I do not know ; " he said, " there ought to be," and then observed jocosely, " it was not our business, we were only passengers." In a few moments Colonel Lippitt returned from partly towards the enemy, and ordered the troops to arms, faced to the right and began to march by files, but before the rear had moved, the enemy's flank guard (I suppose,) fired a small volley at our rear. Whether they hurt or killed any I did not know, as I could not see the rear, or the enemy for the bushes ; and instead of taking an advantageous position, on the top of a hill covered with wood, Col. Lippitt led us to the front, into the Bonumtown road, and then turned towards Brunswick about 20 rods ; on rising a hill, we met the enemy's column with their field-pieces, abruptly ; they did not fire on us as I expected, nor we at them ; Col. Lippitt wheeled then short about and retreated 30 or 40 rods, and formed in line behind a fence ; their flank guard then came out of the woods, and from near where we had stopped to dine, and took a look of us without firing a gun ; but some one or two of our men were so afraid they would, that they run off clear. We stopped but little, and marched off fairly. The manœuvres of this day was enough to terrify the most veteran soldier. It was not our business to begin a fight 20 miles

from home, within the enemy's lines, unless we could surprise an inferior party and grab them at once. If Colonel Lippitt meant to fight, why did he not charge them stoutly when we first met? and if he did not mean to fight, why march us into the enemy's track, and give him a chance to come upon our right flank; while with a part of his force he attacked us in front?

I presume, however, Colonel Lippitt was not acquainted with the enemy's force, nor they with his. The probability was, the enemy was superior in numbers; and having artillery, and being on their own ground, had the advantage. Nothing but the tardiness of the enemy saved us from a cruel defeat. On the other hand of it was a small party, as a guard for stores going to Bonumtown. The want of information and an enterprising officer, prevented the enemy's overthrow. In point of military commanders, I presume neither side had much to brag of." We should think with Captain Olney, for a more stupid piece of work, on both sides, certainly never happened. He then goes on to say, that it was, possibly, owing to indisposition of Colonel Lippitt, who was subject to spells of sick headache.

"The extra month for which I was engaged," continues Captain Olney, "expired about the 1st of February, and I returned home, and supposed I was clear of the army; but found I had been appointed a Captain in the second Rhode-Island regiment, commanded by Colonel Israel Angell. Lieutenant Colonel Jeremia Olney and Major Simeon Thayer were field officers on the continental establishment. My pay hitherto, as a subaltern, had scarcely been sufficient for my expenses and frugal support. I was in hopes that a Captain's pay of 40 dollars per month, would yield me some remuneration, and as the American cause had be-

come more desperate, it seemed like cowardice, and dishonorable to forsake my country now in distress, though many of the officers that had been brought up more delicately, had by the service already performed, become satisfied, and found their patriotism expended, and declined serving any longer."

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## CHAPTER VI.

FOR the first time, except to make a stay of 24 hours, Captain Olney visited his home. It was no small task to get there, but the longing desires of the youthful husband and father to see his family, lent him strength for the undertaking ; besides, he was not alone, the greater part of the Rhode-Island regiment disbanded and came off at the time. They could not come by water, the sound was too unsafe a place, at that time ; and after getting to Albany and crossing the North river, they proceeded on foot, through a part of the State of Massachusetts and Connecticut, to Rhode-Island. It was the commencement of the month of March, 1778, a time of the year when travelling is always bad. Nevertheless, he arrived safe, and had the pleasure of finding his family well, and of seeing for the first time his first born, and spending a few weeks in the bosom of his family.

During his stay in the army, the terrors of the small pox had frequently beset them, the prisoners



brought in from the English camp, were always more or less suspected of infection. It was said, with how much truth we cannot now say, that the British had used stratagems to convey this disease to the American camp. We will not vouch for the correctness of this at the present day, but we will venture to say, that if they did not do it, it was because *they did not think of it*.

Captain Olney was one that had uneasy feelings about it, and he had resolved to embrace the first opportunity to go through regular inoculation. His fears, let no one suppose, was want of courage, or of fortitude to meet death. To die on the field of battle, and to expire in the camp of some noxious disease, is two things. A hospital had been opened in Coventry, R. I., and in the month of April he went and was inoculated. After his recovery and a short visit to his family again, he prepared to rejoin the army.

The victorious chief of the American army in the meanwhile, had been scouring the Jerseys as far as the Raritan, he even crossed this river, and made himself master of Newark, in the county of Essex, of Elizabethtown, and finally of Woodbridge, so that he now commanded the entire coast of New-Jersey, in front of Staten Island, and fortified them so formidably that the royalists shrunk from all attempt to dislodge them. Locked up in the two towns of New-Brunswick and Amboy, they could rarely go out to plunder or even to forage without extreme peril, and many a good brush with them had the Rhode-Island regiments lost, by having disbanded at the time they did. The loyalists in New-Jersey had turned about, disgusted and outraged by the conduct of the British troops, and now made common cause with the republicans, and those who could not fight acted as spies, so that whenever the royalists made a

movement, the Americans were apprized of it and enabled to lay an ambuscade for them. History says "that the cause of this change must be attributed to the unheard of ferocity with which the British carried on the war, and that the cruelties, the massacres, and the ravages, practiced by the British and Hessian soldiers, even under the eyes of their officers, were too bad to mention. These last, who had left their homes and consented for a few pence per day to become the instruments of the tyranny of others, were even more detested than the British.

"The Hessians, it was said, had so loaded themselves with booty, as to have become almost a burden, and the English were afraid to offend them. Hence they laid hands without distinction upon all they met with ; friends or foes shared the same fate that fell in their path ; and so terrible were their barbarities, that one simultaneous cry at length arose from New-Jersey," and in fact, from the whole American continent. The wail of the sufferers was borne across the ocean, it aroused the nations of Europe, and above all "it entered into the ears of the God of Sabaoth." "There was a general exclamation throughout Europe, that the English government had revived in the New World, the fury of the Goths, and the barbarity of the Northern herds."

"But such inhumanity returned upon its source, and became more fatal after all to the authors than to the victims." Having after many skirmishes, succeeded in making them pretty quiet for the present, Washington availed himself of an interval of rest to have his army inoculated; they had therefore gone through with that operation, and the General considered them as delivered from that dreadful scourge, at about the same time that Captain Olney had.

Captain Olney found the quarters changed on his arrival, to a place called Courtland Manor, where they had collected a magazine of provisions, forage, and stores of all sorts. The place they now occupied, was one of great natural advantages; it was a kind of citadel in itself; the little village of Peekskill, about 50 miles up the Hudson, served as a kind of port to it, by which it both received and dispersed supplies. Into this most romantic and picturesque place the principal part of the army had retired, and never did the Round Heads of Scotland, or the persecuted Huguenots of France, select among their mountain fastnesses, a place that looked more inaccessible, than this, upon the river side. A tremendous steep and winding road leads up to the village, while on one side or other a gouge in the mountain is so deep, that it pains one to look down, and people who have nerves generally shut their eyes when they ride up; beautiful and extensive as the prospect is from the top, the pleasure of viewing it is really marred by looking immediately below; if there were no way of access to it but by this route, the American army might have staid there until this time without being routed.

It was early in the month of June, when nature in this region looks so enchantingly lovely, when the blossoms of spring had yielded to the deep green of summer, and the dark glens and gloomy ravines were made still more dark by the shadow of the forest trees that stretched their umbrageous boughs here and there across the gulph below, veiling with perfidious beauty the deceitful pits and chasms that lurked there, that Captain Olney by a steep and narrow path, gained the encampment of the modern Israelites. And oh, what a scene must have burst upon his view. Thousands had been added to the army since he left it; new hope,

new life, new energy, awoke in every bosom; lines above lines, of snowy tents, adorned the sides of the lofty mountains, while the glitter of arms reflected by the summer sun, shone from the crowded ranks, that were paraded on the green. High above the tents, the marquee of the commander in chief, was distinguished, by the banner of his country, (the star spangled banner) ; on every eminence that could be seen, the wary sentinel was walking his rounds, ever and anon turning a watchful eye down the mighty Hudson.

What were the feelings of his brave and manly heart we can conceive better than we can express. He was a man that felt infinitely more than he could express ; and then the cordial recognition, the warm pressure of the hand, and the hearty welcome back to quarters, we may imagine. Washington, whom he had so long followed, Washington, whose mild, benevolent, saint-like countenance, it was worth a journey across the ocean to see, was there, to congratulate the Captain on his promotion.

It is very surprising that among all the descriptions of Washington, that peculiar expression of countenance, has never been alluded to ; though lofty, it resembles what we should suppose that of a glorified spirit, more than a warrior, and just that cast, that the painters of old have given to their saints in their pictures of the resurrection.

With renewed ardor the new Captain entered upon the duties of his station. With him they were absorbing ; friends, family, fortune, were secondary considerations, while the honor, and liberties of his country, were at stake. But his enjoyments at Peekskill were not to be of long continuance. The English being unable to attack them by land on account of their peculiarly advantageous position, resolved to attempt them by a circuitous



path from the Hudson ; and putting their troops on board transports, set out for the service. To spend blood or treasure in defending a place of so little consequence, was no part of the plans of Washington, who had other uses for which he wished to reserve his troops. He therefore abandoned it, and such of their magazines as could not be conveniently removed, they set fire to.

The courage of the army at this time had been very much excited by the accounts from Connecticut, where the British had been successfully repulsed by the militia under Generals Arnold and Wooster, and Colonel Huntington. Arnold in particular had very much distinguished himself, (Wooster having fallen in the early part of the contest,) and not only given the enemy a taste of powder, but actually driven them to their ships.

Colonel Meigs, too, one of the intrepid companions of Arnold in Canada, had crossed the Sound in the night over to Sag Harbor on Long Island, where the enemy's magazines were kept. The Sound was filled with British cruisers. Sag Harbor was defended by a detachment of infantry and a sloop of war of 12 guns. Colonel Meigs, with his little band, notwithstanding a stout resistance, burned a dozen brigs and sloops which lay at the wharf, and destroyed every thing on shore, and returned just before light, bringing with him many prisoners. Never was the gospel command to return good for evil, more conscientiously observed than in this treatment of the vanquished. The Americans abstained from the pillage of private property, and even permitted their prisoners (Englishmen though they were) to retain their private property. Here we must be permitted to make a short digression.

The effect of the treatment we have mentioned, though it went sorely against the judgment and

feelings of many who wanted to make reprisals, was auspicious for the country. The contrast between the conduct of the two nations was so great, so wonderful, that it excited universal admiration. Their moderation and humanity, under such exceeding provocation too ! We cannot but attribute a part of the numerous desertions from the British army to our own to the influence of superior humanity, as much as to any thing else. These desertions it was known were very great.

From Peekskill, the division of the army under Washington, in which was Captain Olney, were marched to the neighborhood of Brunswick again, and took possession of the country along Middle Brook, on the left bank of the Raritan. In this situation they could command a view of the British encampment within a few miles of Brunswick. The American army then amounted to fifteen thousand men, inclusive of the North-Carolinians and the militia of New-Jersey ; but many of the companies were totally undisciplined.

The great design of the British at this time appeared to be to force Washington to a pitched battle. Every art was resorted to, to effect it, but in vain. Washington had resolved never to commit the fortunes of America to the hazard of a single action. In pursuance of this project the entire British army, with the exception of 2000 men left in the defence of Brunswick, Cornwallis, at the head of the vanguard, marched down nine miles and came directly in front of the American army, to give them battle. A division had marched round by another road, to be ready to inclose the Americans, should they accept the challenge. Washington desisted their plan, and only drew up his army on the heights, which defended the front of his camp, in order of battle,

and kept it all the following night under arms, while General Sullivan, with his division, had marched round to disquiet the enemy in front, and then join General Washington, should it be necessary.

General Howe, finding the Americans too wary to fall into his snares in this way, tried another, which was to put on the appearance of fear and retreat to Brunswick, and from thence to Amboy. Accordingly on the night of the 19th, he suddenly departed thence, burning and pillaging houses as they went, in order to arouse the indignation of the Americans to follow him. From Amboy they fell back to the shores opposite Staten Island, and then threw over their bridge, one they had prepared in order to cross the Delaware with. By this means the American commanders were at length deceived, and Washington came down from his strong fortress after them. On the night of the 25th of June, General Howe drew back his troops from Staten Island to the Jersey shore, and putting them into two divisions, one to bring the main body of the American army to an engagement, and the other to push on and gain the fortress of Middle Brook, to prevent the Americans from occupying it again. Unseen and unheard by the Americans, they were coming on, and what the event might have been cannot be seen, but probably it would have been very fatal to the American army, had not Lord Cornwallis, in passing the road just beyond Woodbridge, suddenly fell in with a party of 700 American riflemen. Who these brave fellows were, history does not say. Whether it was some company just coming to join the main army, or some foraging party just returning, but their names deserve to be recorded, to give battle to such a host, for, nothing daunted, they poured in, commenced blows im-

mediately, and, with their little handful of men, warmly disputed the passage. Compelled at last to retreat, and save themselves by flight, many of them made out to get to the camp of Washington, and warn him of the danger of his army ; the firing of their musketry had warned him before of danger, but he could not distinctly understand it, until those brave fellows communicated it. His resolution was immediately taken, to recover the fortress he had imprudently deserted. Accordingly he lost no time in regaining the camp of Middle Brook, and placing a strong force in the passes of the mountains.

Lord Sterling, with about 3000 men, disputed the passage of the army of Cornwallis, but after a short time was routed. Cornwallis attempted to push on towards the American encampment, but the danger from the woody country and the intense heat, decided him to return. The relaxing heat of the climate and its tendency to weariness and lassitude, seems not to have prevented great exertions on both sides. At the time of which we are speaking, prudence warned General Howe and Cornwallis to turn back and retrace their steps. They had now become convinced, that Washington was not to be taken by stratagem, and his impregnable situation was such now that force would be unavailing.

Philadelphia was now the darling project of the British, and as there was no other way, it was now decided to attack it by water. Still in order to deceive the Americans they made a feint as though their intention was to go up the Hudson to join the Canada army, of which news had just been received that they had taken the fortress of Ticonderoga. Scarcely a day's rest had been allowed the army, since the return of Captain Olney to camp ; marchings and countermarchings, alarms,



and retreats, yet he had set his life upon the casting of the die, and he resolved to abide the issue ; personal attachment to the great commander in chief of the American army had now become mingled with other feelings, and he has been heard to say since, that such were his feelings, that “ if he had been so unfortunate as to have lost one leg, he would have continued to follow him with the other.” He had now to commence a rapid march towards Peekskill again, in order to be ready to co-operate with the army if necessary at Albany, for to this neighborhood the British pretended they were now going, and hearing of the success of the Canadian army, there seemed little doubt it was their intention to march up and form a conjunction at Albany. Nevertheless, they had no such intention, in reality, and Washington soon became aware of the truth, and again altered the position of the various detachments, sent out on advanced posts, &c. The history of the various manœuvres of the British fleet, and of those of the American army in consequence, would fill a volume itself. Nothing could be more arduous than the fatigue of moving about continually from place to place, the constant changing of baggage, &c., connected with the harassing anxiety they must necessarily have to undergo. The heat was intense during some part of the time. Capt. Olney, who zealously sought to perform the duties of his new station, was one who never complained. No expression of chagrin, or disappointment, or weariness, escapes him in the journal which he has left. One day the British fleet would be seen steering this way, another that ; while ever as the belief prevailed that he was bound up the Hudson to effect a junction with the army from Canada, under Burgoyne, they were promptly moving northward ; and when from his tacking the other

way, they divined the city of Philadelphia was menaced—then their position was again directed south ; still, the soldiers and their commanders kept up their courage.

Reports of a discouraging nature from time to time reached them from the north. The taking of Ticonderoga fortress and of Fort Edward, was alarming ; but then the news of the battle of Bennington, in which their countrymen had so highly distinguished themselves and proved victorious, convinced them that British arms were not more omnipotent at the north than elsewhere ; still, the great fear was, that a junction might be formed near Albany, that place taken, and as a matter of course, the whole country overrun. The capture of Philadelphia would be a serious injury ; but of all the evils to be dreaded, the junction of the two armies was infinitely the greatest.

While the British troops, after being detained long by contrary winds, were finally on their way from the Delaware to the Chesapeake, (which latter they did not reach until the last of August,) an expedition was undertaken by General Sullivan against Staten Island, in which he landed without opposition, and took many prisoners ; but was afterwards repulsed with considerable loss ; upon which he retired towards Philadelphia. On the 25th of August, 1777, the British disembarked near the head of the river Elk, eighteen thousand strong, of regular and well trained troops, and plentifully furnished with all munitions of war. The whole army took post behind the river Christina, having Newark on the right, and Atkins on the left. A column commanded by Cornwallis, having fallen in with Maxwell's riflemen, routed and pursued them as far as White Clay Creek, with a loss of some dead and severely wounded. The American army, in order to encourage the

inhabitants, had marched through Philadelphia, and were now encamped behind the White Clay Creek, partly in the town of Newport, and near the Christana river, on the Philadelphia road. The air through the summer months, and even for some time in the autumn, in this region, is very close, from the low swampy shores of the Delaware, peculiarly so, fertile and beautiful to the eye, as the rank luxuriance of vegetation is, the climate is peculiarly trying to an English constitution. Both parties felt the oppressive heat sensibly, but too much was at stake to heed it.

The battle of Brandywine was fought in one of the most delicious spots in the fertile State of Delaware. The whole route from Couche's bridge, 25 miles from the battle ground, is through a very fine country, as well as the battle ground and its environs. It is about sixteen miles from Wilmington and four from Chester. Nothing can exceed the romantic beauty of the Brandywine walks, as they are called, for miles above Wilmington. It seems impossible, while gazing on the quiet loveliness of the spot, to realize that the voice of war ever disturbed the soft repose of the scene, that the foot of the ruthless conqueror ever pressed the velvet turf.

Captain Olney had the misfortune, (shall we say,) to be absent on the memorable 11th of September. On this day he was stationed at an exposed post, which they thought proper not to leave unguarded, in Jersey.

The main army had recently been reinforced by some gentlemen of France. Lafayette, the Baron St. Overy, and Captain De Fleury, had generously volunteered their services. The Marquis Lafayette had himself chartered the vessel that brought him over, and had received the appointment of Major-General in the army of the

United States immediately on his arrival. The Count Pulaski, also, a noble Pole, had come over to the rescue, and all of these were in the battle of Brandywine. The disastrous result of that battle is well known. It appears that Washington was deceived with respect to the British army having crossed the river, and supposed until they were within four miles of him that the Brandywine was between them. Knowing, however, that a battle was now inevitable, as the last resort to save Philadelphia, his mind was made up to the event, and notwithstanding the disparity of their forces, the British having the superiority by several thousand, he had decided on it, and the disposition of the different brigades were already made.

A council of war had been held at the house of Mr. Joseph Tatnal, at the Brandywine village, near Wilmington, on the preceding evening, and the plan settled for the attack, or defence, whichever should be found expedient. At this hospitable dwelling, the General and the other officers of the American army had been made welcome ever since being in that vicinity, and he had been hastily summoned from there on the preceding evening by the report, which was afterwards found to be false, of the British having passed the Brandywine. At the time this really took place, on the succeeding day, they were lulled into a temporary security.

We were told by an aged person in the vicinity of the battle ground, of the Society of Friends, who has a distinct recollection of the events of that week, that Washington and some of his officers were seated around on the bank of the river, for the first time taking some refreshment on that day. The hero sat on a stump with a piece of ham in one hand and bread in the other, when a



messenger suddenly appeared before him, saying that the English army had passed the river, and were within four miles. Dashing the untasted morsel to the earth, he sprang to his feet and gave the necessary orders. The drums beat to arms, and every thing was now in a state of preparation. Generals Stevens, Sterling, and Sullivan, on the right wing, sustained the first assault, and with great valor. Washington perceiving them at length give way, led on to the rescue—but it was too late; he met the flying soldiers of Sullivan, and in vain sought to rally them.

Gen. Greene, by a judicious manœuvre, opened his ranks to receive the flying fugitives, and then closed them again, covering the retreat in good order, checking the pursuit of the enemy by a continual fire of artillery which covered his rear. And having retreated as far as a wood, he again drew up his men and faced the enemy. His corps composed of Virginians and Pennsylvanians, defended, and could mortal arm have turned the tide of battle, without the aid of numbers, his would have done it. The third division of the Americans, being assaulted with great force, the republicans there stood firm until hearing of the retreat of the first division, and seeing a new party of the enemy coming upon their rear, they retreated to the wood and passed behind the position of Gen. Greene, who was still with his men in the heat of the battle, defending themselves bravely ; nor did they retreat or cease their fire until the darkness compelled both armies to give over.

Had General Greene never distinguished himself on any other occasion, this enterprise alone must have stamped him as one of the greatest Generals of the age ; cool, resolute, and undaunted, he had that superior judgment and self-possession in the hour of extreme peril that belongs to

few. The Frenchman, and the gallant Pole, were of signal use that day ; they not only enacted prodigies of valor, but when they found the fortunes of the day were lost, they assisted materially in conducting the retreat, and establishing order. Near 400 were taken prisoners, and to the great regret of Congress, the Baron St. Overy was one. General Lafayette was wounded in the leg, and Captain de Fleury had his horse shot under him. The battle of Brandywine commenced at 4 o'clock, in the afternoon and lasted until dark, nearly four hours. The Americans lost 300 killed, and 500 wounded, and 400 taken prisoners. The English had over 400 wounded and prisoners, and 100 killed. This, in an army of 15,000 men, and in such a sanguinary fight, does not seem a very large number. The whole American army retreated that night to Chester, and the day following, to Philadelphia.

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## CHAPTER VII.

WITH mournful feelings, the commander in chief and his brave associates, turned themselves from the field of battle, and from the sad spectacle of their departed comrades, their unburied dead. " 300 immortal souls, are this day to us as though they had never been," said a brave and venerable man to his friend, attached to the corps of General

Greene, as they marched with cautious steps on that night towards Chester. "Yes, and we may join them to-morrow," responded the other, "but, if I live, may I be hanged if I don't avenge their deaths, as far as one arm can do it." The unflinching and indomitable spirit manifested during the war by even the poorest and most destitute of the friends of liberty, is truly astonishing.

The day after the battle of Brandywine, towards evening, the English sent a detachment of light troops, to Wilmington, to pillage, &c. and put the inhabitants under contribution. They took the Governor of the state, prisoner, searched the houses for treasure, but did not find much, as the honor of their visit had been anticipated, and the wary inhabitants took the liberty to hide it, where no foreigners would be very likely to find it; however they were very polite to them, and many insinuated they were very much their friends, and at several houses where they did them the honor to call, the hosts regretted exceedingly their wives and daughters were not at home to do them honor!! their apologies were accepted, and much civility exchanged on the occasion. They entered the Brandywine village, as it is called, (a little handful of houses, just under the hill, that overlooks the river of that name, and a most romantic spot) so suddenly that they were not perceived by the inhabitants, until they were in the midst of them. Two little girls, at the entrance of the village, sat see-sawing on a board, and singing Yankee Doodle, a tune, by the way, originally composed by a British officer, in derision of the Americans, and afterwards adopted by them as a national air. It is truly laughable that notwithstanding its parentage, none of the Englishmen heard it afterwards without getting into a passion. On this occasion the terrified children fled to their

parents pursued by the soldiers, who being fastened out, burst in the windows. The father however called for their commander and requested his protection, and he, probably thinking it of more importance to push on and secure the person of the Governor, than to "frighten unarmed women and children into fits," bade them desist, and marched on. These anecdotes were narrated to the author while travelling through that region, by some aged persons in the vicinity.

It will be remembered, that immediately after this, Washington, having recruited his army, marched out to give the enemy battle, but a heavy rain coming on, he was obliged, and they too, to withdraw. By a series of manœuvres the British General succeeded in placing himself between the city of Philadelphia and the forces of Washington. It was now obvious that one or the other must fall, for from the condition that the army were now in, it was prudent not to engage the enemy in a pitched battle. Some forces had been sent for from the Jerseys to reinforce them, and among the rest the Rhode-Island regiment to which out hero belonged, but they had not yet arrived, and Washington was obliged to abandon Philadelphia to the enemy. The Congress immediately adjourned to Lancaster in Pennsylvania, removed the public magazines and archives, and ordered the vessels at the wharf removed up the Delaware. About 20 individuals were then taken into custody, the greater part Quakers, avowed enemies to the State. They were sent off to Stanton in Virginia, for safe keeping. Cornwallis and his army entered it on the 26th of September, while Washington encamped quietly within sixteen miles of Germantown to await the event.

The army of the enemy immediately set about fortifying the city, while the Americans, with the



frigate Delaware, anchored within 500 yards of them, and commenced a bombardment of the city, but the tide falling they were finally exposed to the whole fire of the British, and obliged to strike. In anticipation of this event the Americans had been constructing, at great labor and expense, all manner of obstructions to interrupt the navigation of the river, thinking they could starve out the enemy, if they could only prevent their being supplied by water, as they trusted the army could cut off their provisions by land. In pursuance of this plan, they had erected forts at Red Bank, at Mud Island, called Fort Mifflin, and one at a place called Billings' Point, lower down, on the Jersey shore. They had also constructed a chevaux de frise in several places on the river to prevent the large vessels from passing to the relief of the British army.

It was while things were in this state that the battle of Germantown was fought. It was an attack upon the extended forces of the British, planned with consummate wisdom, and a hard fought battle ; but owing principally to a thick fog that came up, the Americans were obliged to retire, and not being able to see each other, experienced considerable loss.

The loss of Philadelphia caused no discouragement to the Americans ; they had just heard of the capture of Burgoyne's army, on the plains of Saratoga, a victory far more brilliant than that of their adversary in entering Philadelphia, when no one opposed him. The most unbounded confidence was reposed in their Generals, and particularly, in the commander in chief.

With regard to the forts and removing the obstructions in the Delaware, the fort at Billings' Point, was first attacked, by two British regiments, under Colonel Sterling ; and the Americans not

feeling quite able to defend it, with the force they possessed, abandoned it, after spiking their cannon and setting fire to the barracks. Two strong forts yet remained, fort Mercer at Red Bank, and fort Mifflin at Mud Island, the most considerable of the three. The garrison at fort Mifflin, was commanded by Colonel, afterwards Gen. Smith, of Maryland, the present mayor of Baltimore, ; and fort Mercer, opposite, by Colonel Greene.

General Howe had arranged for the attack of these forts ; and before giving Captain Olney's account of it, perhaps it is proper to give some idea of the place, and of the plan laid by the British General to reduce it.

Mud Island lies from seven to ten miles below Philadelphia; it is near the junction of the Schuylkill river, on the right hand or Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, as you go down towards the capes. Tradition says that it was originally, only a bank of mud and sand which being in the way, gradually accumulated, until it attained its present dimension ; but it bears a strong family likeness to the low marshy and sunken shores that border the Delaware, and may very fairly be exempted from the charge of having made itself. To this day, it preserves a kind of embankment against the water, and the same defence is conspicuous for many miles down the river. The channel, which is narrow, will not admit large ships of war.

It seems scarcely possible, in tracing the ruins of these fortresses, to suppose they could have been such redoubtable places of defence ; they certainly look like very inefficient places, but manned by brave spirits, they sustained one of the most obstinate and protracted sieges of any during the war, and the delay they occasioned to

the prosecution of the war on the part of the British, perhaps saved the American army.

The plan laid by General Howe to attack these forts on the 22d of October, was to make the attack on three sides at once. Batteries of heavy cannon had been planted on the Pennsylvania shore, back of fort Mifflin. The *Vigilant*, ship of war, was then to pass up the narrow channel which separates Hog Island from the Pennsylvania shore, to attack it in the rear, while the ships *Iris* and *Augusta*, with the frigates, should come up the middle channel, which was wider and deeper. Fort Mercer was at the same time to be attacked in the rear by a strong detachment of Hessians, under the command of Colonel Donop, a German officer of great reputation, whose very name had before carried terror with it. The fort of Red Bank, which was the first attacked, consisted of extensive out-works, within which was a strong palisaded entrenchment, well furnished with artillery.

Captain Olney speaks of Greene and Angell's regiment being ordered to the defence of fort Mercer, or Red Bank, as it was generally called.

“ The fort, he says, had been calculated for not less than 1500 or 2000 men, and our effective force of both regiments, (that is, the two Rhode-Island regiments,) was not more than 500 men, including a small company of artillery. Colonel Greene ordered a breastwork made across the fort, so as to include about one third of it, which he meant to defend, evacuating the remainder, except by a few sentinels, to deceive the enemy. Our men were on duty all the time to complete the breastwork by the 22d of October. At that very time, about one o'clock, P. M., the enemy appeared on the Jersey side, with a force said to be 1200 strong, of Hessians. They had a British Major with

them, who acted as linguist, and who advanced with a flag, and demanded the surrender of the fort, saying, "their force was amply sufficient to take it, and if we persisted in defence, they would give no quarter, therefore our blood would be on our own heads."

"Lieut. Col. Jeremiah Olney, of Providence, who had been deputed to meet the flag, replied with spirit, "We shall not ask for nor expect any quarter, and mean to defend the fort to the last extremity." The place of meeting was only about ten or twelve rods from the fort, and Col. Olney had scarce time to get into it before they followed him by a tremendous discharge of grape shot and ball. Col. Jeremiah Olney, who was sent to meet the flag, was as brave a man perhaps as any in the army." It appears he really never knew what fear was. Many anecdotes of his intrepidity have at various times been narrated to the author of this work, the particulars of which have now escaped from her recollection, tending to prove it, and the example, it was said, was not lost upon those who fought under him. He died in 18—, some years before his friend, Captain Olney. Honor to the memory of the brave! The descendants of those who so nobly fought for freedom, have a legacy that no reverses of fortune can take from them, and honor that no titles could bestow.

"The enemy had placed their field pieces or artillery (said to be twelve) on the edge of the woods, within point-blank shot, and their first general discharge was tremendous. It made the gravel and dust fly from the top of our fort, and took off all the heads that happened to be in the way. They then instantly advanced in two solid columns. Their left came first within musket shot, when we gave them a serious and well di-



rected fire, which rather disordered their column. Still they continued to advance, and one or two officers were killed or wounded on the brim of the breastwork, but the column became so broken that they were obliged to retreat. By this time the other column had made its way into that part of the fort which we had evacuated, and supposing they were masters of the fort, huzzaed! and came on, perhaps, to cut up their prisoners. When within 50 or 60 paces, we began a fire upon them. They were put in disorder by getting over the fort. The officers persisted in pushing forward the men, until within about two paces of our breastwork, when our fire proved so destructive that they gave it up and retreated, leaving their dead and wounded. Eighty-seven of the former were buried in the ditch the next day. It was believed their killed and wounded exceeded 400. Our loss was small. Captain Shaw and four or five privates were killed, and 20 or 30 wounded."

"I believe Asa Potter, of our company, was killed by our own men. My company was stationed in a salient angle, connected within the curtain of the breast work, to rake the ditches on each side. When fighting, I thought my company quite secure, as the enemy looked to the bastions on each side; therefore my men were deliberate, except one little Irishman, who was frightened out of his senses, but a few strokes with the but-end of my gun brought him to his duty.

"While the enemy were in confusion, not more than 20 paces off, a man by the name of Sweetzer insisted that I should see him kill when he fired. I indulged him four or five times, and his object fell. I then directed him to fire at an officer, and he only made him stagger a little. We fired at the column that came first. Our men partly on my left and rear fired across my station. When

that column retreated and the other came up, I fired and fired upon it, and our men on the other side of the works, also fired across my station. Next day, Lieutenant Samuel Whipple told me he counted 13 musket balls lodged within the breast-work, where it was impossible the enemy could have lodged them. The first line of the enemy's artillery, intimidated some of the men so much they were afraid to show their heads above the breastworks, raised their guns and fired by guess work, notwithstanding Colonel Jeremiah Olney was busily employed thrashing them with his hanger. Count Donop, the German officer, who led these Hessians to the attack, fell on this day ; he received thirteen musket ball wounds and retreated out of the works, 20 or 30 rods, where he fell, but was brought into the fort after dark by Major Thayer, at the request of the Count's servant, but died in a few days.

“I had charge of the guard on that night after the battle. My sentries were placed round the whole fort. The part we had evacuated on the preceding day, was covered with dead, wounded, and dying Hessians. The groans and cries of the wounded and dying, were dreadful music to my ears ; and but for the reflection of what would have been our fate had they been victorious, our sympathy would have been truly distressing.

“The day had been quite warm, but the night was extremely cold. I had on thin clothes, and never suffered more at any time or season of the year. Several of the wounded and nearly dying, appeared to suffer with the cold. I had them removed into a little hut without any floor, where was a little fire, which rendered them more comfortable than in the open air.

“The fort erected by the British on the Pennsylvania side of Mud Island, in order to reduce fort

Mifflin, was so near our station at Red Bank, that they fired one 24 lb. shot over our works ; this battery, with a ship cut down to make it draw less water, commenced a brisk fire on the fort, at the same time that one or two of our gun-boats attacked the English ship, and altogether made the most tremendous cannonade for about one hour that I ever heard."

At the battle of Red Bank, or Fort Mercer, besides killing their commander, Mingerode, the second in command received a dangerous wound, and Lieutenant Linsing, who had then to command, suffered much in conducting the retreat by the galleys and floating batteries of the Americans. Captain Olney makes no mention of the Chevelier Du Plessis, one of those noble spirits who came over with Lafayette, and volunteered his services in the suffering cause of freedom ; but it was certain that to his superior skill and valor, in directing the artillery on that day, they were greatly indebted ; he was in fact, on that occasion, "the spirit of the storm." The land force that attacked fort Mercer, were obliged to go back to Philadelphia. Captain Olney estimated their loss at about four hundred, but it was supposed by persons, in that region, that not less than 500 were killed or mortally wounded ; as they went out 1200 strong and returned with only 700 ; but this diminution might have been in part from desertion. Through the whole war, this evil proved a terrible annoyance to the British ; notwithstanding the great prospect of booty and pillage, it was not always possible to retain soldiers to burn, slay, and destroy, at sixpence per day.

The ships that advanced to attack Mud Island, (Fort Mifflin,) soon found themselves in trouble, from the obstructions the Americans had sunk in the river. They found themselves obliged to wait

for flood tide, which delay inconvenienced them exceedingly ; besides which, a strong northwardly wind prevented one of them from taking the advantageous post assigned for her near the Pennsylvania shore. The *Augusta* and *Merlin*, the most considerable of these ships, became grounded so fast, they could not be moved. The frigates, however, reached their stations, and commenced a brisk fire upon Fort Mifflin. A curious anecdote is related of General (then Colonel) Smith, the commander. In the heat of the battle, while the balls were whizzing about their heads, he observed one of his Aids dodging this way and that, to avoid the balls and shells that passed him. It did not exactly comport with the ideas of bravery which the sturdy veteran had imbibed, and he turned fiercely to him, saying, "What do you dodge for, sir? the king of Prussia lost thirty Aids in one day." "Yes," replied the young man, with much quickness, "but Colonel Smith has not so many to lose." This was something like Captain Olney beating courage into one of his Irish soldiers with the but-end of his musket.

Notwithstanding the batteries on shore were opened upon Fort Mifflin at the same time, and the assault was tremendous, yet the shades of night fell upon them without their having derived any important advantage—and the Americans seized the opportunity to repair the breaches in their works, and put themselves in order for battle on the following day. On that night, Captain Olney, with a party of his soldiers, went over to assist in preparing them. A fatigue party, he calls it. They had to put up a row of palisades through a mud slough. "Cold, wet work," he observes, "and answered no purpose."

The attack of the preceding night was renewed the next day ; not with any expectation of reduc-



ing the fort, but in order that under cover of the fire, their ships might be got off. But notwithstanding their efforts, the two ships were lost; the most considerable, the *Augusta* took fire accidentally and blew up, and the British set fire to the *Merlin* and blew her up, to prevent her falling into the hands of the Americans. Their frigates of course, had to be drawn off, to avoid the effect of explosion; so the battle ended for that time. This was on the 22d or 23d of October, and the attack was not renewed until the 15th of November, as the English were not in a situation to renew it until then. Col. Smith was slightly wounded, and had to give up the command to Major Thayer, of Providence, a brave and patriotic man, who did not disgrace the charge committed to him. Congress voted their thanks to Colonels Greene and Smith.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE preparations to reduce fort Mifflin, still went on, while Red Bank had a season of repose; the British were fortifying a little morassy island called Province Island, in its rear, in order to batter fort Mifflin in its weakest part. They were incessantly employed in conveying their heavy artillery and stores of all sorts, and the Americans perceived with regret, that when their works should be completed, their own situation would be no longer tenable. Washington would have desired to expel

the enemy from this place before their works should have been completed, but was obliged to abstain, as his army in that case might be surrounded, which would have been fatal.

Every thing being prepared for the attack on fort Mifflin, it was renewed on the 15th of November. All their ships having arrived at their posts, they opened a furious cannonade ; the Americans defended it with spirit, from the fort, while the batteries from New Jersey and the galleys, stationed near that shore, began at the same time to return the fire. " It seemed," said an aged dweller near the scene of contest, " as though heaven and earth were coming together." The tremendous roar of the guns was such as to be almost deafening to a person on shore ; the fort itself was so shrouded in smoke and flame, that it was impossible to see what was going on there, except when occasionally a gust of wind would sweep over, blowing it partially aside, and disclosing the busy scene acting on the ramparts.

The manœuvring of the ships, as they occasionally wore round to give a broadside, and the dexterous manner in which they managed to avoid collision, was truly worth seeing. As fast as one breastwork was battered down, the Americans retreated behind another, until all the outworks one after another, were knocked away, and the ditches were filled with their ruins ; not in the least disheartened, they continued the defence, though obliged to defend themselves from the body of the fortress. Their situation now became critical, but darkness, the season for plots and stratagems, was coming on, and they strained every nerve to hold on, until then, and then to show them one more Yankee trick ; " we could only," says Capt. Olney, " be spectators all this time." Darkness, of

course, put an end to the contest, and preparations were making with the enemy to renew the attack next day; but behold, the next morning there was no force there. The Americans knowing it was now madness to attempt to defend a place in ruins, secretly conveyed all their stores and baggage over to Red Bank, destroyed and set fire to every thing about the fort, and conveyed themselves over to the opposite fort, Mercer, at Red Bank, which yet held out. The last strong hold of the patriots in that region, was that defended by the Rhode-Island regiments.

The morning dawned upon the deserted island, and found only a blackened and solitary pile of ruins, standing within the swampy land, silent and deserted; the spot, that a few short hours before, was a scene of such spirited warfare. No sound, succeeds to the roar of artillery, save the shriek of the water fowl as she flies over the island, or the ripple of the lazy stream, as it flows along the shore. Oh, it was a scene for the philosopher, but not long had he to contemplate it, for the situation of things was soon discovered by the British, and a force marched in to take possession, and a despatch forwarded the same day to New-York, and to their army in Canada to announce the "*capture of the important garrison of fort Mifflin.*" Capture, indeed!!

To dislodge the soldiers of Congress, (as they were then termed) from Red Bank, was still a task; the obstructions to the navigation of the Delaware could not be removed until this was done, and much precious time had already been consumed; as the winter was approaching, and they began to find a dearth of supplies, the scarcity of wood and provisions in Philadelphia began to be distressing. At length it was determined to send out another force to attack fort Mercer in the rear; this

was commanded by Cornwallis. General Greene was sent round to oppose him ; he went accompanied by Lafayette as far as Burlington, but learning there that the force of Cornwallis was greatly superior, he desisted, and prudently abandoned the plan of giving him battle.

The Americans at Red Bank, finding Cornwallis approaching, with such an overwhelming force, concluded to abandon the fort. It was only, however, upon losing all hope of succor, that they retreated, leaving their artillery, some stores, &c. They had several galleys and armed vessels near, now unprotected, and they took the advantage of a dark night, and run them past the batteries of Philadelphia, up the river. The English immediately despatched the Delaware frigate and a party of seamen to man it, and took other measures to completely environ them. The Americans determined they should not fall into the hands of the enemy, set fire to them and abandoned them, and they were all consumed, seventeen in number, including two floating batteries and four fire-ships. The Americans, themselves, escaped into New-Jersey, and regained the army of Washington.

It was now the last of November, and the season was so far advanced, the obstructions could not be removed, but in part, and the resistance of the Americans at these forts had so hindered the enemy, that they could find no opportunity to attack the army of Washington, before the victorious troops from the Hudson had joined him, and they were not disposed to attack them, then. The troops that assisted in taking Burgoyne, seemed to carry great terror with them.

Captain Olney was now again with the commander in chief ; various manœuvres were practiced before they went into winter quarters, to induce Washington to fight to a disadvantage ; being



very advantageously posted, they endeavored to draw him from his position, at White Marsh, down to the plains to fight. He did not avoid them, but waited to receive them in his lines, when they retreated, and took up their winter quarters in Philadelphia. Washington likewise began to look about for accommodations for the winter; and finally selected the Valley Forge, a deep and rugged hollow on the west side of the Schuylkill, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. "While on the banks of the Delaware," says Capt. Olney, "we drew a ration of salt pork and hard bread, and for the first time, I relished such food without the process of cooking, and even thought it delicious. This fare perhaps made us more discontented at Valley Forge, where for several days we had no rations at all, only parts of rations. I cannot forget one good supper we had there, through the activity of some young men of our mess, who went out to buy food, and while knocking at the door for the man of the house, offering to pay for any provision he could spare, the hens began to cackle. They heard one say to another, 'what are those dreadful Hessians about?' Either the dread of Hessians, or the thought of selling property for our bills of credit, so stupified the man, that he did not rise from his bed. The chickens, however, came to the camp and made a most excellent stew, verifying the old saying, 'stolen meat is sweet.'"

The history of the winter at Valley Forge, is one of great trials and hardships; and if true in all its details, it certainly does reflect disgrace upon a large portion of our country; that the troops fighting the battles of freedom should have been permitted to suffer to the extent they are said to, and yet unrelieved; that they should have been destitute of suitable clothing, of food, of medicine,

and nothing to lie on but the bare ground, through the inclement season of winter, in such a country as ours, where people now are wild almost to look up objects of charity, and multiply benevolent societies so fast that it is feared the multiplication of paupers will increase in an even proportion ; that such a people ever could have been so hardened, knowing such suffering existed, where it was not generosity, but justice, to relieve, appears impossible ; and notwithstanding history gives such a lamentable account, for one, we must take the liberty to think it exaggerated. That their hardships were very great, inasmuch as they had not always a sufficiency of such food as they craved, and that their lodging was hard and indifferent, and that there was a want of comfort and cleanliness among so many men huddled together in those small huts so as to generate disease, we fully believe ; but that matters were quite so bad as is generally represented, we do not believe.— And our reasons are, first, that Captain Olney, who is quite candid at all times, in speaking of losses, of trials, of sufferings, and defeats, says nothing about it, except in the paragraph we have already inserted, that for a few days they were supplied with but part of their rations. True, he left, on furlough, about the first of January. He gives as a reason, that there were a great many mouths to feed, and a large proportion of officers to the men, and he thought he could be spared as well as not. But says nothing of any suffering ; nor on his return, of having escaped any hardships by being absent, which with him, would have been perfectly natural. The way in which he reviews the campaign of 1777, will be convincing to every reader, that his fault did not consist in looking to the bright side of the picture. Speak-

ing of the furlough procured to come home, he says :

“ Here ended the campaign of 1777, by no means very propitious to the American cause, though perhaps not more discouraging than at the close of 1776. The actions which effected the capture of Burgoyne’s army and the defeat of the enemy at Red Bank, were all the successes on our side except the battle of Princeton.” [Mistake.] “ The former was of signal importance, as it revived the drooping spirits of the people, and was thought to have induced the French nation to become our allies. Mr. Dean had been dancing attendance at the French court a long time, but could effect nothing, until after the news of this success. The grand army of the enemy had obtained all the success which their warriors contemplated. They had defeated our army at Brandywine, our attack at Germantown, and part of our army under Gen. Wayne, and accomplished their grand object in entering Philadelphia; but all this seemed to avail them nothing, so long as Congress had power to recommend, and Washington commanded the shadow of an army.”

Another circumstance, that first excited doubts whether the sufferings of the army at this season was not exaggerated, was, a few years since being in company with an officer who was quartered with the army at Valley Forge through the whole winter, and hearing him tell of the balls he attended in that region, which he stated ‘ were made on purpose for the officers,’ and proceeded to say that though they had hard fare that winter, he believed they, both officers and men, on the whole, *never enjoyed themselves better*. Still there was a great mortality there from some cause.

On several different occasions, it has been the

privilege of the compiler of this work to fall into the society of some of the old soldiers of the Revolution, who partook of the hardships of this winter-quarters, and who assured us they enjoyed life well during that period, and dwelt with much satisfaction upon their adventures in robbing poultry yards and pig styes, and when questioned as to their hardships, they would reply, that they "had a pretty hard time, but a *great deal of fun with it.*"

The history of that period says, that "in the month of February they could not have mustered 5000 effective fighting men, out of the 17,000 then in camp." If this were so, and all owing to the want of suitable clothing and lodging, and improper food, it was certainly a great disgrace. The history of that period sets forth in glowing colors the besetting sin of the country—the love of money. The mortality of our soldiers, at that period, induced by their hardships and privations, (and granting there may be some exaggeration, there is enough of it true,) we are assured was owing to the cupidity of those who had the supplying and the sale of provisions and clothing. The merchants refused to supply them with necessary clothing, and the farmer with provisions, on account of the depreciation of continental money.

There were exceptions to these avaricious persons. Contractors or commissioners who were wicked enough to seek to enrich themselves, by spunging these poor but brave men who were hazarding their lives in defence of *their* property; and even still worse, there were those who did not hesitate to carry their produce to the enemy, because they paid the best—paid gold! gold! which has made so many villains; pity it were ever dug out the bowels of the harmless earth.



An appeal to a man's pocket, excites more sensation than any thing else. Public spirit, patriotism, all fall before it.

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## CHAPTER IX.

It was during the winter of 1777-8, while the army were encamped at Valley Forge, that a plot was formed against the commander in chief. Anonymous letters were written to Congress, and to different persons in the Union, to induce the belief that all the disasters of the war, and the then state of suffering too, were wholly caused by his want of skill. One of these letters was directed to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, and one to Henry Gore, of Virginia. Both transmitted them to Washington. General Conway, an Englishman by birth, declaimed valiantly and openly against him, and General Gates, a brave man, but an Englishman by birth, again was supposed to have had a hand in it, from the circumstance of his keeping silence, when the aim of the plotting was evidently to exalt him to the chief command.

As to Washington, he bore the abuse and misrepresentation, which hourly annoyed him in some shape or other, with the most perfect equanimity of temper and in silence. He might have vindicated himself successfully, and covered himself with honors and his enemies with confusion, but

the country must have suffered, and to make any division in the army would have materially weakened, if not ruined the cause.

How much America owes to the prudence, the circumspection, and the perfect command of temper exercised by this one man ! and we may add, humility !

The manner in which he wrote to Congress, on the 27th of January 1778, "that he had not accepted the office he held without distrust of himself, but that as far as his abilities permitted, he had aimed to do all for the good of his country; that his appointment had been unsolicited, and that whenever they found one better qualified to fill his place, he should resign it and retire, with as much pleasure as ever the wearied traveller retired to rest," was submissive. Who could resist so sweet a reply ? who be insensible to the angelic spirit in which it was conceived ? He was patient and quiet under all circumstances ; but it was not so with his soldiers. With blazing indignation they heard of the abuse of their beloved commander. Conway was obliged to retire, and durst not show himself among the soldiers after he was exposed, in the part he had acted ; and even Samuel Adams, who had rather leaned towards the side of the complainants, either because he was deceived into a belief of some of it, or because he thought it not right (as was supposed by some) that Virginia should supply us with a commander in chief, when New-England had produced so many able ones, it is believed would not have been safe, if he had chanced to show himself to the soldiers of Washington, while their resentment was at its height. Captain Olney too, who was now enjoying quiet in the bosom of his family expressed the warmest indignation at the treat-

ment of Washington, by his intriguing and designing enemies.

The advantages of a meek and quiet spirit, even in this life, are very great. The wise and good man of whom we are speaking experienced it in an eminent degree. He kept perfectly quiet under the greatest provocations, and providence, in its own time, brought about the exposure and the punishment of his enemies ; made his righteousness clear as the light, and his just dealings as the noonday. The soldiers who had served under Washington, in the preceding campaign, generally testified their zeal by following him again, and preparations were making for another tedious campaign. A large and well disciplined army from England, it was well known was expected over in the spring, to reinforce that of General Howe, and a fleet to co-operate with it, and as yet it was not ascertained that any of the nations of Europe would form a treaty of alliance, or even acknowledge our independence. In the month of March two companies of Americans had been surprized at the bridges of Quinton and Hancock, and although they surrendered and asked for quarter, they were all barbarously put to the sword, and murdered on the spot, in cold blood. These things in themselves were discouraging. Yet did not our fathers of the Revolution shrink ; no, these barbarities were only an additional incitement ; hundreds who had never ventured before, upon hearing of these things, rushed to the field of battle ; but bravery was all they had ; clothing, arms, ammunition and discipline, they were dreadfully deficient in, though in the latter respect they were now gaining. Baron Steuben, a Prussian officer of distinguished reputation, who was himself a perfect soldier, and had served under Frederick II. had undertaken to teach the soldiers of the Re-

public, and they were fast improving under his instruction.

That Heaven always helps those who help themselves, is as true of nations as of individuals ; a change was at hand. Various rumors, from time to time, had reached the country, of assistance, and treaties, &c., with France, and a latent hope had always existed that it might be so ; but with many, it was a faint one. Yet the energy, the perseverance and fortitude of Congress were not in the least abated, and could only be exceeded by that of the commander in chief and his brave associates. But, behold, brave men, the reward of your constancy is at hand, and even at the door ; and already the bark that conveys the glad tidings of political salvation, is on its way. The winter, memorable for the extreme of your sufferings, shall be memorable for your triumphs too. While you have been enduring the multiplied evils of hunger, and cold, and nakedness, for the sake of your country, the great Governor of the universe has been working out for you a reward exceeding all your calculations.

Every ship that entered port was regarded with scrutinizing interest ; we can imagine the excitement then, when the noble French frigate *La Sensible* entered the bay, having on board the brother of Silas Dean, the bearer of despatches to the Congress of the United States. All was tumult ; Congress was hastily convened, and the budget opened. The treaty of amity and alliance was signed in behalf of the king of France by M. Gerard, and for the United States, by Benjamin Franklin, Silas Dean, and Arthur Lee. This treaty (let it never be forgotten,) was obtained only by the pledge on the part of the representatives of the American States, "*That they should never renounce their independence, nor submit to British domina-*



tion." Bear it in mind, oh, you who are invidiously insinuating sentiments hostile to the liberties, and insulting to the common sense of the country.

This treaty was no sooner read, than ratified. What ages of suffering those patriotic men felt recompensed for in that moment ! The news was speedily forwarded by despatch to the army.

With the greatest solemnity, Washington ordered out all his soldiers under arms, and all the corps formed in order of battle, and then announced the joyful tidings. What transporting shouts rent the air ! What warm, hearty, cordial congratulations followed the communication of so joyful an event ! It was a day of joyful thanksgiving ; and how did those shouts sound in the ears of the enemy ? Why, the first use they made of the information, was to pick up their alls and prepare to fall back on New-York, fearful that the first thing they would know, would be a French fleet at the mouth of the Delaware, and lock them in between two fires.

John Bull, for this time, overshot himself. They had been debating in the British Parliament, whether it was best to push a war that as yet had yielded them but little promise, and how far it would do to be lenient to these audacious rebels, and how much more punishment it would do to try upon them, &c., and what it would be best to do, before America could make any bargain with France. When up gets Mr. Fox, and announces the fact that "The treaty was already made." This was a dead set ; but it only whetted their invention, and they laid their heads together, forthwith to devise a remedy. This was to send a most pacific offer of *almost independence* to the United States. They should have the privilege (more than they went to war for,) of electing all their own officers of government, regulating their own taxes, and trade, and a great deal more, only

acknowledging one superior, the King of England; whom they were to consider as a *father*, and who was to have a kind of *motherly* care over them; and this should be sent by a swift messenger, who was to race it through the Atlantic Ocean and get there first, which being the mistress of the seas, they had but to will, and have all signed, sealed and ratified, before the deadly Treaty should reach them; commissioned at the same time, in case that Neptune, himself, should turn traitor, to alter and modify it, to suit the times. One not to be forgotten offer, was to pay all our debts, (albeit, they could not pay their own.) Meanwhile, the French resolving not to do things by halves, selected one of their fastest sailing vessels, and best commanders, M. D'Marigny, to bear the despatches; and the English straining every nerve, soon got here, to be sure. But, alas! the Frenchman had got here first; and Washington, that immovable republican, refused the British commissioners a passport to the seat of government; he was not a person to argue with; he could not be moved to a doubtful action, or one that he thought so. Terribly indignant as they must have felt, they had to swallow it, and forward their letters by post. We will not attempt to paint the tumult in Congress, when these letters were read; the insolence of their language towards France was highly resented. They (the British Commissioners) pretended that the offer they now made the Americans had been decided on some time ago, and that France had found out what they were about to do, and had hastened to get the start of them, "to prevent reconciliation, and prolong *this destructive war.*"

The michevalism of this manœver, we believe, never could have been exceeded by any court di-

plomacy ever conceived before. Congress, however, saw through it, and they gave them just such an answer as their duplicity and cruelty merited.

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## CHAPTER X.

IMMEDIATELY after these events, Captain Olney returned to camp ; his furlough had expired ; and he found the soldiers in new spirits. The issue of the contest was no longer doubtful ; a moral certainty now existed that we should eventually secure our independence, although much was to be done. The main army was now about to march after and harass the British on their retreat. A council of war had just been convened to decide whether it was, or was not expedient to attack the enemy, and try the fortune of a decisive battle. The commander in chief, who had hitherto been averse to putting so much at stake at once, was now for a pitched battle. But in this he was opposed by some, and particularly by General Lee, who had lately returned to the army, having been exchanged for Prescott. It is certainly a suspicious circumstance, that this General, who demeaned himself so strangely at the battle of Monmouth, should have opposed attacking the enemy at all. But as so many opinions have been formed respecting the real character of this General, grounded principally upon the singularity of his conduct on this day, in which he so highly offended Washing-

ton, and for which he was punished by a court martial by being suspended one year, it is a matter of curiosity to hear what an eye witness of the transaction thought of it. The Rhode-Island troops composed a part of the division commanded by General Lee on that memorable day. On the 18th of June they were ordered out at ten o'clock, and continued on parade, a *most irksome situation*, as Captain Olney observes, until nine at night, when they took up the line of march upon the track of the enemy. The heat, from this time to the 28th, (the battle of Monmouth,) was intense; and the sufferings of the army, exposed to such a burning sun, must have been great. In no place in our country, perhaps, is the heat more oppressive than in that region; having no sea breeze, and so much swampy, marshy land, there is a peculiarly stifling, disagreeable sensation from the heat in this quarter. Hence travellers complain of the heat of Philadelphia more, perhaps, than any other of our cities. On the day of the battle of Monmouth, Captain Olney says,

“After marching two or three miles we arrived on the plains of Monmouth, having a wood near at hand, on our left. It is worthy of remark, that two brigades had been sent forward as a vanguard, by the commander in chief, under Lee and Lafayette; and Lee, as the senior officer, took command of the whole vanguard, so that Gen. Lafayette, had only the militia and light-horse. Gen. Knyphausen, of the British, had been sent forward with their baggage, and had got some distance ahead; and General Washington had sent round a detachment commanded by Colonels Morgan and Dickinson, to attack this convoy, encumbered by their long train of carriages and baggage, while he ordered General Lee to attack them in front. Consequently, the first attack was made upon the



rear-guard of the enemy, commanded by Cornwallis and Clinton, their commander in chief. The rapidity with which Clinton faced about and attacked the light-horse of Lafayette, rather astounded General Lee, and obliged him to form his troops upon ground rather unfavorable ; having a deep ravine behind, which rendered his retreat difficult, to say the least. Captain Olney says,

“The heat of the day was so intense that it required the greatest efforts of the officers to keep their men in the ranks ; and several of my company were so overcome and faint in coming, that they said they could go no farther ; but by distributing about half a pint of brandy, which I happened to have in my canteen, (which the second sergeant had put there) I made out to get them along. We had not yet seen the enemy, but General Lee came in haste, and ordered Colonel Olney to march his regiment and occupy the woods in our left. We had scarcely reached the woods, when the front of the regiment wheeled, and commenced a retrograde movement. At this instant the enemy appeared and discharged their artillery. The first ball took one of my corporals in his knapsack and back ; some one said “Corporal —— is killed.” I answered “never mind, he has paid the last debt.”

We continued our retreat in good order, not faster than a walk. Our artillery seemed to be well screened and kept the enemy in check. When we came to the end of the plain we formed in a line front of a morass, and began a fire with musketry. The enemy came on with such impetuosity, that they turned our right flank, which threw us into disorder, and we retreated. At this instant our main army came up, commanded by Washington himself, and commenced a heavy fire with

our artillery ; and the British found they had got a fresh army to contend with."

Washington happened to come on at the very moment that the retreating soldiers of Lee had been pushed beyond the ravine, and before he had time to rally. At the first sound of the firing, the commander in chief hastened forward, and reached the ground just at the critical moment when the soldiers were about dispersing in their flight. It was the first time they had ever seen General Washington unable to restrain his resentment. Short as the time was, he addressed some very harsh words to General Lee, and then applied himself with equal skill and courage to restore the fortunes of the day. He ordered two battalions, under Colonels Stewart and Ramsay, to occupy a post on the left behind a little grove of wood, and there to sustain the first efforts of the enemy.—General Lee, stung by the reproaches of Washington, now exerted himself to rally his troops, and get a more advantageous ground. Here, for a time, they defended themselves gallantly until overpowered by numbers ; they then fell back to rally anew, but in the mean time the rear-guard had arrived. General Greene and Lord Sterling were enabled, on that day, to do great execution on the enemy from the advantageous position of their artillery.

The English attempted to turn the left flank of the Americans, where they were repulsed by the light infantry ; they then directed their efforts against the right, which they endeavored to surround ; in this they were completely foiled by Gen. Greene, who charged them so vigorously they were obliged to retreat. Washington seeing them give way, caused them to be charged regularly by General Wayne. The English now retreated be-

hind a ravine, and victory was no longer doubtful. Washington had made an immediate arrangement to charge them anew, with his own brigade and the Carolina militia, but the night came on so fast, they were obliged to defer it until morning. But behold, in the morning the enemy had decamped, and was far out of the way. They started at midnight and so still that they were perfectly unobserved by the Americans who were quite near too. Clinton in his despatches, wrote home, that "he travelled in the night to avoid the sultriness of the day, and that as they had moonlight," &c. It occasioned much sport at the time, as the moon was only then on her fourth day, and set before 10 o'clock. However, they had gained so many hours upon their pursuers, and the heat of the weather was so extreme, that the commander of the American army decided not to follow them, as it would not now be possible to get between them and New-York; he therefore allowed his army to repose in camp until the first day of July, (three days.)

The battle of Monmouth, like the battle of Bunker Hill, was fought on one of the hottest days in the season. Very few fell on the part of the Americans, but a number died from the intense heat, joined to the fatigue of the day. The English had 300 killed and 300 wounded, and about 100 taken prisoners, and lost a considerable part of their army that day, by desertion, particularly among the Hessians.

Captain Olney continues, "Thus ended the battle of Monmouth, which was not so sanguinary and fatal (according to the numbers engaged) as it was distressing on account of the heat. Some were of opinion that more men lost their lives on account of the extreme heat of that day than by gunpowder. My own sufferings and distress from

the heat on that day, were greater than the fear of death from our foes.”

If the heat was greater there on the 28th of June, 1778, than it was on the 26th of June 1838, it must have been almost unendurable. The writer recollects hearing the inhabitants remark, it had not been so warm there since the battle of Monmouth.

“As General Lee’s conduct was so severely censured, I will take the liberty to make some few remarks, although my rank and situation did not permit me to know the plan of attack. There was, I presume, no one who could know with what force the enemy would come; or what movements he would make, or whether he would not be found embarking his best troops. If General Lee had peremptory orders to attack the enemy in any position, no doubt he was wrong in making a retreat. It seems the enemy made a division with their best troops, to check the advance of our army, in order to gain time to embark for New-York. If General Lee conceived the enemy’s force equal to his, he was justified in his retreat, as the main army was not within supporting distance, (in the commencement of the contest,) and his manner or mode of retreat was well calculated to gain time for the main army to come up. And if the main army had been only one half hour sooner in the field, and advanced by the woods and made the attack, on the enemy’s right flank, it is probable the British would have paid dear for their temerity in pursuing Gen. Lee so far.”

General Lee’s orders were peremptory, though Captain Olney could not have known it at that time. It was the very object for which Gen. Lee was sent forward, and at this day there is but one opinion on the subject.

“In this way the enemy generally managed ;



instead of coming up in the rear of the parties engaged, they always (where the ground would admit,) brought their reinforcements so as to attack our right or left flank. 'This I consider a fixed principle in the manœuvres of war, and the means by which nearly all victories are gained.'

"Perhaps it was a great mistake that our troops were so late in the field; but little matters often defeat the best concerted plan."

Here ends the account of the battle of Monmouth, where 300 of the enemy were left dead upon the field. The bold and haughty Englishman, the sturdy Dutchman, and the grim Hessian, lie side by side, weltering in their blood. Enemies, indeed, they were, but who knows they are dead? Who has been to see if life is extinct? Who, realizing that they are human beings, has wandered forth over the crimsoned field, to see whether life has yet fled? To see whether the vital spark has so far gone that it cannot be recalled? To receive the last sigh, to aid the prayers of the expiring sinner, and to convey a drop of cold water to their parched lips? Alas! Alas! Not a word is said on the subject. It seems that this is no part of a soldier's duty. Many of our own men, and many more of the enemy, were left for dead, and reviving, crept from the field to the nearest house, where they recovered of their wounds.

Capt. Olney must have credit for being unique in his remarks. We believe he is the first person who has attempted an apology for Gen. Lee, for that day's mistake, and he absolutely, as the saying is, "puts the boot on the other leg."

## CHAPTER XI.

Two days after the battle of Monmouth, the British army destined to reinforce General Clinton, arrived off Sandy Hook. The timely arrival of the fleet, which conveyed it, enabled the British to cross over and get to New-York : and on the night of the 8th of July, the French fleet commanded by the Count D'Estaing, gained the mouth of the Delaware, and found to their great mortification and disappointment, the British had retreated to New-York. Nothing could have saved them had the arrival of the French fleet been a few days sooner. D'Estaing proceeded to Sandy Hook ; here he was supplied with pilots from Congress, and they advised him that it was impossible with his *large* ships to go up to the city. Since then a channel has been discovered by Lieut. Geddes, sent to survey the harbor. The city of New-York has presented him with a medal ; and the Prince de Joinville, in June last, when here with the *Hercules* and his squadron, was ignorant of this discovery, or the fete held at Newport would have been at New-York. D'Estaing withdrew about four miles down, and concerted with the American Generals about the expedition to Rhode-Island. While lying off Sandy Hook, several English vessels bound to New-York, with warlike stores and provisions, fell into his hands, in sight of the British squadron, whose indignation was vehement, but they had no way to help themselves. It was at length decided that he should come to Newport, and the Rhode-Island regiment was ordered round by land to co-operate with the fleet. D'Es-

taing gave them one fright at New-York before he sailed for Rhode-Island. He drew his fleet up as far as was judged safe by the pilots, and paraded them in sight of the city. The English put themselves to a great deal of trouble to defend themselves as well as they could, when after considerable manœuvering, he turned off and steered for Rhode-Island. It was a subject of great lamentation with the Americans, that he had not attempted the passage, hazardous as it was then judged to be, or at least stayed a few days longer at Sandy Hook, as he would inevitably have captured four large ships of Lord Byron's squadron, which dispersed and scattered in a storm, and then arrived successively at Sandy Hook.

As to General Washington, he had immediately after the battle of Monmouth, marched the principal part of his army towards Hudson, in order to secure the passages of the mountains. He left some detachments of light troops, and particularly Morgan's dragoons, in the lower part of New-Jersey, to take up deserters, and repress the incursions of the enemy. But when, after the arrival of the French fleet, a detachment was sent to Rhode-Island. Captain Olney was again separated from the army of Washington, and constrained to go and assist to drive out the enemy from his native State. They were accompanied by the Marquis Lafayette, and had the Count D'Estaing been of his spirit, the object would have been accomplished. It was during this journey, that a degree of intimacy was formed between the gallant Marquis and his humble companion in arms, Captain Olney. There is a sympathy between the brave, that like *masonry*, is at once recognised, and its claim allowed. He was not unknown or unnoticed by General Lafayette before this, but

circumstances brought them more together after the battle of Monmouth.

The expedition of Sullivan to Rhode-Island—a thing which excited so much interest at the time, and ended in—nothing—is familiar to most of our readers ; we shall, therefore, pass it over as Capt. Olney does, with a few words. “The attempt to dislodge the British at Newport, was abandoned even after Sullivan had landed on the island, and was within a few hours’ march of the town of Newport, on account of the refusal of the Count D’Estaing to co-operate with him. It is believed by many, that the Count, who went to the rescue of Newport, felt himself insulted because Sullivan dared to get there first ; that he meant to have taken the town of Newport, which he could have done with ease, and made the whole garrison surrender to him ; or in case of their flight, Sullivan would have stopped their egress from the other side of the island.” But Sullivan, whose down-right good sense never dreamed of such chivalry. Poor man, he thought he could not do too much ; and that he was exceedingly obliging to be there already on the ground, and to strike the first blow. The Captain does not speak in very patient terms of the departure of the fleet in such an inopportune moment, against, as he says, the urgent solicitations of General Lafayette, and all the American Generals. The aged inhabitants, who were then on Rhode-Island, think D’Estaing fully justified, as he waited for the forces of Sullivan nine days before they came. But he assigns no reason for the French fleet going to Boston ; and merely observes, that he took winter quarters at Warren that year, and that the Rhode-Island regiment was encamped on Barber’s heights, and that it was not until towards December, 1779, that they marched back again to New-Jersey and encamped near Mor-



ristown, where they were immediately set to build huts, to make themselves comfortable in winter quarters.

Except in intercepting the British, in their foraging excursions, it is probable that Capt. Olney was not engaged in any active service during the winter. Other States had their occasional tumults, and were as often the seat of war, but New-Jersey was the constant seat of both. They lived in perpetual fear. The harassed inhabitants were no sooner set down in one part for a breathing spell, than tumults, pillaging, and murders, commenced in another ; and of all the States they were the most to be commiserated, and by odds, the greatest sufferers.

“ On the 23d of January,” says Captain Olney, “ the army advanced in a large party to a place called the Connecticut Farms, (a place about midway between Springfield and Elizabethtown,) our regiment was ordered to defend the bridge at Springfield ; in all the various situations I had been placed in, before an expected engagement, I never had so much difficulty to reconcile my mind to the fate contemplated.”

“ There was a road some twenty or thirty rods parallel in our rear, where I expected the enemy would advance a party as soon as they should think proper to attack in front. Agreeably to their common mode of fighting, I expected soon to have an enemy in the rear, as well as a powerful one in front. The affliction of my mind was such, though reconciled to my destiny, and able to act the part of a good soldier, that I felt inclined to sleep, even under the fire of our field-pieces, which had began to play with alacrity.” The effect of fear, as a sedative, has been often mentioned ; we recollect some years since, of being much afraid on the water, during a thunder-storm, and the great difficul-

ty of keeping awake while the excitement was on."

"At length, through hope and confidence in the Supreme Ruler of the Universe and Disposer of events, I felt resigned to whatever might fall to my lot; and when the enemy's flank guard of riflemen (yagons,) advanced on our left, I asked Col. Jeremiah Olney to let me take my platoon and engage them. This met his earnest approbation; I marched a few rods into an orchard of large trees, and thought it prudent to place several men behind each tree, believing they would fire more accurate and be less exposed; at the same time moving about from one to the other myself, directing them to take good aim, particularly at the commanding officer of the British, who was considerably advanced in front, on their right. It seemed no ball would stop his speed; he came on firing regularly, and the wind of their balls would at times shake the hair of my head. Perhaps my hair was rather erect and sensitive. I had not fired more than five or six times before I observed the right of the regiment on the retreat, and the enemy's flank boldly advancing to within twenty yards, notwithstanding my fire. I ordered my men to take possession of a small hill covered with wood. The enemy's sharp shooters now advanced rapidly, and one of their rifle balls passed through my left arm. I bound up the wound with my handkerchief, and then thought best to retreat. We had not passed the road more than five or six rods when I discovered a fresh column of the enemy advancing to attack us in the rear. As I had contemplated, I let them go by without any compliments, and joined the regiment which had been paraded some little time since its retreat.

Thus much of the battle of Springfield. I be-

lieve no troops were engaged but the Rhode-Island regiment, which did not muster on that day more than 160 rank and file, 40 of whom were killed and wounded. As to the enemy, they were *sorely satisfied*, and burning a few houses, returned to winter quarters. After my wound was dressed by Dr. Tenny, I left the regiment in quest of some place of repose. At the first house, about three quarters of a mile, I was overcome with faintness and obliged to tarry a little while. Being recovered, I proceeded to houses where they appeared to be wealthy, and entreated quarters (for pay) a few days without effect. At last I came to a poor looking house. The owner was a weaver by trade, who cheerfully took me in and treated me with kindness. Those people, thought I, who feel adversity, have the most sympathy for others in distress. In a few days I went to the hospital at Bearskin ridge, where I staid eight or ten weeks. The ball took its course so near the bone, that it was a long time before my arm proved well."

During all this time, matters of moment were going on in the United States which we must cursorily glance at, in order to make our narrative understood. The commissioners sent over from England, from the most soothing, pacific, hypocritical offers, treated with merited contempt, descended to bribery; officers of the government and of the army were tampered with, and offices and rewards in abundance held out, to induce them to lend their influence to betray their country. Gen. Read particularly was solicited even by a lady, who sought him on the part of Johnston, (one and the principal of the commissioners, and a tory refugee,) and wanted to engage him in a plot to reunite the two countries, promising in case of success, "a reward of ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the Colonies in the king's gift."

General Read replied, "that he was not worth purchasing ; but such as he was, the king of Great-Britain was not rich enough to do it." Congress, to whom this was communicated, were very indignant, and refused to negotiate with him afterwards. The three other commissioners issued a counter declaration, and denied all knowledge of such transactions. They had the impudence, however, to issue proclamations and speeches (and by means of the tories, they were spread throughout the country,) the most artfully contrived, to create dissatisfaction among the people against Congress, and disgust towards the French ; and after the departure of D'Estaing they made that a subject of ridicule and accusation. So exceedingly insolent and personal were they at length, that the Marquis Lafayette challenged the Earl of Carlisle, one of them, to fight him in single combat, which that nobleman very dexterously refused, shifting his responsibility upon his office.

Irritated by the steady contempt of Congress, and having no encouragement, by making even a single convert, the commissioners issued a proclamation wherein they threw off the mask and gave vent to the deeply rancorous and revengeful feelings that agitated them. They threatened to burn, ravage and destroy, until the country should be glad to submit ; and that they would no longer try to repress their soldiery ; would, in addition, let loose the savages, and that all our exposed towns and villages should be sacked with such remorseless vengeance, as was never heard of before ; "that the vast continent of America was peculiarly open to incursions and ravages ; that its coasts were of such an extent they could not be guarded against an enemy that was master of the sea, and that it would be easy to penetrate to most of



the towns and settlements, and spread destruction into every province of the continent."

Our limits will not permit us to give the whole of this brimstone proclamation, in which, however, boastings of favors conferred, of past good intentions and present good wishes for this country, were strangely mingled in grotesque combination with threats which would disgrace Turks and Russians. But, as they threatened to do no more than what they had already done, and what was always expected of them whenever they got the power, nobody was scared ; and with a great part of the people it was rather a subject of merriment and standing jest, than otherwise ; and it is certain their insinuations against the French, had only a tendency to unite the two nations more strictly than before.

The indignation of Congress, however, was great, and they issued a proclamation, recommending, "that whenever the enemy proceeded to burn any town, the people should in like manner, proceed to burn, ravage, and destroy the houses and property of all tories and enemies to the independence of the country." This was, in reality the best and surest way of putting a preventive in the way, as their own interest must keep them from sacrificing their few friends in the country. They added in the proclamation of Congress, however, that the persons of such tories should be safe, "as the Americans would scorn to imitate their adversaries, or the *allies they had subsidized, whether Germans, blacks, or savages.*" The concluding paragraph was one of the most sublime appeals we ever remember to have read, but we have not room for its insertion.

The commissioners departed for Europe ; and Congress being now convened at Philadelphia, received the first Minister ever sent to the country,

M. Gerard, Minister Plenipotentiary of the King of France, who delivered his letters of credence signed by Louis XVI. and directed to his "very dear friends and allies, the President and members of the General Congress of the United States of America." M. Gerard made a very handsome and appropriate speech, and was as handsomely answered by the President of Congress, Henry Laurens. The authorities of Pennsylvania, strangers of note, officers of the army, &c. were present, and many were the rejoicings on that occasion.

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## CHAPTER XII.

WE pass by now the events of a year, one of the most interesting in the annals of the revolution; events we should delight to dwell on, but Captain Olney, the hero of our story, was not there. The weakness which succeeded the healing of his wounds, confined him from the army for some time, and after that he was stationed in New-Jersey and the state of New-York, at important and exposed points, but not again in a battle, until the year 1781. The brilliant successes of the French on the high seas, the success of our own little navy too, was often the subject of conversation and cordial rejoicing in the American camp, while the ardor of republicanism was kept alive by the continual cruelties of their despotic antagonist. The slaughter of the village of Wyoming, one of the

most unparalleled instances of barbarity ever heard of on the civilized earth, was perpetrated during this year. The French stood appalled, nothing they had ever known of warfare among civilized nations, had ever equalled it, and conjointly with the Americans, they thirsted for an opportunity of avenging it. The cruelties exercised by the merciless savages at that period, procured almost the extermination of their tribes afterwards. What Clark and Butter had done before, was followed up by Sullivan, whose name carried such terror among these tribes as completely to paralyze them.

Charleston had been taken, the battle of Camden which reflected so much glory upon the American arms had been fought, and war in all its horrors had been raging in South and North-Carolina, and on the borders of Virginia, and even the battle of Guilford Court-House, which was not until March 1781, had been fought before Capt. Olney was stationed at a place called Brown Brook, in New-Jersey. "Nothing material happened," he says, "while I was there except the desertion of our General, Arnold, and the execution of Major Andre as a spy. Perhaps there never was an execution in presence of our army, that occasioned so much sympathy. To see a man in the flower of his years and morning of life, engaged in the pursuit of worldly honors, and in full health, about to end his life on a gibbet (a mode of death abhorrent to his feelings,) was too affecting for many to behold without a tear of sorrow. He was of a ruddy complexion, dark hair and eyes, and in manner and address pleasing. He wished earnestly and requested to be shot, but it could not be granted, for our laws for the crime were obliged to be executed, and the like punishment had been inflict-

ed by the British, on our men, without compassion."

"Such was the firmness of Washington, and his determination that the law should be executed, that he ordered the court martial to consist of general officers, fearing those of a lower grade, might be swerved from their duty, by feelings of compassion, for the engaging and unfortunate prisoner."

"In January, 1781, our regiment crossed the North River and built our huts for winter-quarters in the State of New-York, and called the place Rhode-Island Village. At this place, the two Rhode-Island regiments were consolidated into one, under the command of Colonel Christopher Greene, Lieut. Colonel Jeremiah Olney, and Major Flagg, field officers. The latter was on guard at Croton Bridge, and Colonel Greene thought it his duty to visit the guard, and convenient, to stay nearly all night. About break of day a party of British light-horse surrounded their quarters, killed Major Flagg in his room, or bed. Colonel Greene discharged his pistols at them, when they inflicted several sabre wounds on him; and then mounting him behind one of their horsemen, bore him off—and when at some little distance, he expired. This was the account as I heard it. By this sad affair, Rhode-Island lost one of her firmest patriots and most valiant soldiers. Major Flagg, too, who belonged to Newport, was considered a most meritorious officer."

"Some time in February," says Captain Olney, "I was detached with a light infantry company, under the command of General Lafayette. We marched for Virginia; but when we had reached Annapolis, the Marquis had orders to return, and join the main army near New-York. At my request, he gave me a furlough, supposing the ene-



my had quit Virginia. When he had returned to the head of Elk river, he received counter orders, and proceeded to Virginia, where it seemed the enemy were marauding with little or no opposition."

Capt. Olney, meanwhile, was on his way home, where his presence was much needed. He had a young family to see to, and various duties of a domestic nature called him to his farm. He was now the father of two children. His second child, Joseph Olney, was born in 1779, and his wife had now the care of two young children. Yet the call of duty to his country was always the primary one with him; and the following July he again retraced his weary journey to join his company. They were now in Yorktown, in Virginia, and hither he followed, and arrived in time to be a partaker in the crowning glory of the American arms—the capture of Cornwallis.

It is worthy of remark, that during all the contests and disasters, the disaffection and mutiny which had signalized the last few months, the confidence of Captain Olney had not diminished, in the least. It is known to all familiar with our revolutionary history, that another season of discouragement and danger, had intervened more menacing than any that went before it. The capture of Charleston, the successes of the British in the south, generally, and the unfortunate termination of the attempt upon the coasts of South Carolina by D'Estaing, was not all; the want of money to pay the soldiers their arrearages, and the want of almost every necessary in camp, had combined to cause a spirit of discontent, and at length, one of mutiny. The succors so long expected from France, had been but partially bestowed, and it was constantly suggested by the tories, (who seemed to have insinuated themselves

every where,) that that power was only intent to aggrandize themselves by conquests in the West-Indies, while America was left to fight it out by themselves; and finally, a meeting was got up among the soldiers, and some 1600 marched to Philadelphia to demand redress of Congress. It is worthy of remark, though it seems to have been overlooked by historians, and only casually mentioned, that this meeting was in part, got up, and certainly commanded by a deserter from the British army, one Williams by name; he was so far a ringleader that the soldiers who had not a single officer with them, unhesitatingly put themselves under his command.

It will be recollected, two mighty tumults had been created in the States before, by soldiers whose ringleaders were deserters from the British camp, one at Boston, the other at Charleston, where the French and Americans actually joined in battle, and several were killed. With the greatest difficulty this ferment had been allayed by the mutual endeavors of the Generals and other officers of the two allies.

The British General too, at New-York (Clinton) was apprized of every thing appertaining to the insurrection, almost before it took place, and immediately sent three of their loyal friends *to condole with the mutineers* and offer them every remuneration for their sufferings and privations, upon the single condition of their abandoning the American service, and throwing themselves into the arms of his Majesty's friends at New-York. "They did not wish them to take up arms against their countrymen, by any means; they would excuse them from enlisting in his Majesty's service; they merely wished to befriend them and relieve their necessities, and for this purpose gave them a very polite invitation to New-York, where they pro-

mised to pay them all the arrearages due them, by the American Congress, and supply amply all their necessities." The cunning Yankees, for some of them were Yankees, as politely, and doubtless as sincerely, said, "they would think of it," and in the meantime compelled the three worthies, much against their will, who brought the message, to stay and partake of the hospitalities of their camp. A deputation met them on the road, who inquired their demands; and upon being informed, they were so far complied with as to give satisfaction. A free pardon being bestowed on them for their insubordination, they turned back to their quarters, carrying in their company the three commissioners, and delivered them up to their officers. They were immediately hanged without any ceremony.

Washington never left his place, nor went a step after the mutineers, but when from the example of their coming off so well, a company of his own undertook the same measures shortly after, he punished them with exemplary chastisement, and put a stop to all further mutinies. Even while this very discontent was at its height the generous head of the French nation, stimulated as he was, by the enthusiastic suggestions of all the people, was sending them ample supplies of money, provisions, and warlike stores, together with a powerful fleet, and an augmentation of the army. And the finances of the country were fast becoming regulated and improved, and a new order of things introduced into the financial department, calculated to remedy the heavy evils of their late clumsy and inadequate system. The genius of one financier was successfully exerting itself to remedy the errors, which administrators to whom such business was new, had almost invariably fallen into—a proof among many thousand, that it is always darkest before day, and that we are

almost sure to be most discouraged when relief is at hand. As to the individuals in question, it is still the opinion of many that the country is nearly as much indebted to the financial operations of that period, as to the negotiations of Benjamin Franklin, or even to the arms of George Washington.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

BEFORE Capt. Olney reached his camp, events had gradually transpired which had much changed the aspect of things, and this brave man who had never desponded in the worst of times, yet now felt with the rest his hopes and courage revive. The operations of Sumpter and Marion, in the south, had been productive of extensive good, although no very signal victory had been obtained. The enemy had been kept in check, their frequent marauding and foraging excursions rendered extremely hazardous and difficult, and their cruelties restrained. In the swamps and morasses of North and South Carolina and Virginia, the republicans held undisputed sway, and in many of these rallying points were formed, known only to the friends of freedom, unless it was now and then to some treacherous tory, who occasionally volunteered to lead the enemy to the slaughter of their countrymen, but this was rare. The bogs were intricate and dangerous of themselves, and



the British had a terrible fear of falling into ambuscades in those gloomy wildernesses.

In all the towns and villages there were friends to give warning of premeditated attacks, and it was very rare that these haunts were disturbed except when the republicans were apprized and ready to receive them. Enabled thus by bravery and stratagem to hold out, and their numbers augmenting steadily, they were at length relieved by the approach of Gen. Greene and his forces, which they hastened to reinforce. Even the tories in all that region, for the greater part, had become disgusted with the barbarous proceedings of the British in Charleston. Their flagrant violation of promises and treaties had incensed the inhabitants greatly. It may be recollected that the enemy stipulated with the inhabitants, upon the reduction of the city, not to compel them to take up arms against their countrymen, if they would then lay them down, and deport themselves as peaceable citizens of his Majesty's government, and that they falsified their promises and violated their engagements, compelling them afterwards to take up arms in their cause, and hanging them if they deserted from such a forced and abhorrent service. The execution of Colonel Hayne, in a particular manner, had greatly exasperated the inhabitants of Charleston. Hundreds of loyalists were among those who urgently besought the barbarous and blood-thirsty Rawdon for his pardon; he refused it, and the consequences to himself would have been dreadful, had he not almost immediately after taken himself off to England. The officers in Gen. Greene's regiment besought him to retaliate, and take exemplary vengeance, but he refused.

With the marchings and counter-marchings of the Americans in the south, of the plot of Washington to take Arnold, the traitor, off the coast of

Virginia, and of his narrow escape from the army of Washington and Lafayette, and from the French fleet off Cape Henry, our readers are familiar, and doubtless recollect the anecdote of the flag, which on some occasion was sent to his head-quarters soon after ; when he asked the person who bore it, who chanced to be a Quaker, what the Republicans would have done with him, if they had caught him. The messenger, with the blunt plainness of his profession, replied, "Buried thy legs, which were scarred in our service, with every mark of honor, and the rest part of thy body we should have hung."

The Quakers occasionally figured in the war of the revolution. General Greene was one by profession, before the breaking out of the war. And in Philadelphia, where the astonishing fact is recorded, that the Quakers were among the most virulent of the loyalists, there were still exceptions ; a company in the early part of the war, was formed in that city, composed wholly of young men of that Society, who fought in defence of liberty.

To give some brief account of the situation of the American army, and of the enemy, upon the arrival of Captain Olney, as also of a few of the preceding events, is necessary here, to make his story understood, without the trouble of a reference to the pages of history.

After the departure of Lord Rawdon, for England, the command of his regiments devolved upon Colonel Stewart, who commanded at the battle of Eutaw Springs, in which the Americans, although victorious, lost, in killed, wounded and missing, 600 men ; while the loss of the enemy, probably doubled that number, besides 500 of their men taken prisoners. For this, General Greene

had been publicly thanked by Congress, and presented with a conquered standard and a medal of gold ; and well did he deserve the gratitude of the people when he went to release General Gates in the command of the Southern army ; he had found them in a most calamitous situation, but by his talents, courage and address, he had soon raised them from a state of despondency, and compelled his adversaries to flee before him, behind the walls of Charleston.

Cornwallis, who had been ravaging Virginia, assisted by that fiend, Benedict Arnold, burning, plundering, hanging and destroying, as they went, was now approaching ; and General Phillips had been very near taking the city of Richmond, which was saved only by the timely arrival of Lafayette, who had, however, the mortification to witness the conflagration of Manchester, a town opposite, on the right bank of the James River, which the English burnt without the least necessity, or even pretext.

After a march of 300 miles, through difficulties of every sort, Lord Cornwallis had arrived at Petersburg, where he effected a junction with Phillips, and took command of the whole British army in that region ; here, after staying a few days and being reinforced by some hundred soldiers sent him from New-York by Clinton, he decided to cross the river James and penetrate into Virginia. The Baron Steuben, with a part of the American forces, then occupied the upper parts of the Province, the Marquis Lafayette the maritime districts, and General Wayne who was on the march hither with the regular troops of Pennsylvania, was yet at a great distance. It was while in this station that Tarleton committed those dreadful excesses in Virginia, which helped stamp his name with indelible infamy. It was here too, that the expedition

against Charlotteville was planned, principally to bring off the person of Thomas Jefferson, who of all the patriots of the revolution had rendered himself one of the most obnoxious ; his efforts in the cause of liberty had been untiring, although he never took the field as a soldier ; yet he had wielded the pen with no small success. He had the good fortune to be apprised of their approach ; and with the assistance of his neighbors, secreted a very large quantity of arms and ammunition, and then put himself out of their reach.

It would be tedious and unnecessary to describe the various manœuvres practiced by the two Generals ; Cornwallis on the one hand and the Marquis Lafayette on the other, previous to the former taking his station at York, where he, it seems, awaited his fate. Suffice it to say, the army of Lafayette had now become reinforced by the arrival of General Wayne, and they had harassed the enemy exceedingly in their attempt to get to Portsmouth to embark a portion of their men for New-York ; which Clinton, thrown into a panic, by rumors of the approach of a French fleet bringing a reinforcement of troops, had ordered back to New-York.

After having, with infinite labor, attained the object of reaching Portsmouth, and embarking the troops required, (the Americans hanging on their rear, and having had several severe skirmishes with them,) counter orders arrived to retain them all, and fix upon a secure position for an intrenched camp, from which they could have a retreat in case of necessity, suggesting at the same time, Old Point Comfort as a suitable place. Upon examination, Cornwallis decided it would not answer the purpose, and finally fixed upon Yorktown, where, as "the Hunters of Kentucky" have it, he was completely "*treed*." The reasons which in-



duced General Clinton to change his mind, was the arrival of a reinforcement from Europe of 300 Hessians.

Lafayette, from the moment that the enemy had entrenched themselves at York, was intent upon keeping him there, until the French fleet could arrive at the mouth of the Chesapeake. Washington, in the mean time, had gone back north, in order to hold a conference and arrange measures with the French at Newport. At Weathersfield in Connecticut, he had an interview with Rochambeau; Count D'Barras, who commanded the French squadron off Newport, was to have been present, but his other duties prevented; however, the business was arranged, and the arrival of the Count D'Grasse was to be the signal for commencing the siege of New-York; the reduction of that city being deemed the most important. The difficulties, however, of that fatal sand-bar, and the little time that the French fleet could stay on the coast, determined Washington to change the scene of action, and substitute the siege of Yorktown.

The British in New-York, having got a clue to the late intentions of the allies, it was managed to keep them in the persuasion of an attack meditated on New-York, to prevent them sending succors to Cornwallis. To this end, Washington wrote letters to Congress, and to the southern commanders, apprizing them of their intention to besiege New-York, and sent them by such ways as he knew would be intercepted by the enemy. The stratagem succeeded, and Clinton was deceived. In the mean time the Count D'Rochambeau marched with 5000 French to the borders of the Hudson. Washington marched on and effected a junction with him from the opposite side. They then marched to King's bridge, and took up

their quarters there, and continued to insult the British outposts for some days ; and to render appearances more sure, they took plans of the works at New-York, under the very fire of their batteries. They then caused a report that the Count D'Grasse was daily expected at the Hook, and marched down a force to Sandy Hook and the Jersey coast, with the apparent view of seconding him, and even carried the deception so far as to establish a bakery near the mouth of the Raritan, just within the Hook. Washington then, himself, with the main body of the army, hearing of the actual arrival of the fleet upon the coast, crossed the Croton river and the Hudson, and proceeded by forced marches through New-Jersey to Trenton, on the Delaware, giving out " that he was going out into an open country in order to tempt Clinton to follow him to a place where he could fight him with superior forces." Clinton, again deceived, kept still. Washington marched on with extreme speed to the head of Elk river, across Pennsylvania, and appeared suddenly upon the northern extremity of the Chesapeake bay. *An hour after*, so admirably had the operations been concerted, and so providential had every thing favored their plans, the Count D'Grasse entered the Chesapeake bay. This was on the 28th of August, 1781. The Marquis Lafayette had established his head-quarters at Williamsburgh. Captain Olney was there, and had, as he states, " joined them in July." Nor did they live an idle life during that month—constantly watching the enemy, looking out for the fleet, erecting fortifications, intercepting communications, and so on. It may be doubted whether there ever was a season during the war of Independence, of such excitement, and such watchful and intense interest with Lafay-

ette, as the month preceding the arrival of the French fleet, and the army of Washington. What feelings of exulting joy, of unbounded rapture, he must have felt to find they had both arrived at once !

We must now attempt to give our readers an idea of the situation of the Royal Army, and this not in the language of the historian, which would not be understood by the generality of readers, but in the good old fashioned way of "*as thou goest*," which we humbly conceive to be the most simple and comprehensive mode of description to persons of moderate capacities, *like ourselves*, of any ever attempted. First then, after entering Chesapeake Bay, from the Atlantic Ocean, you find yourself opposite Point Comfort, the place recommended by Clinton, for the entrenchment of the British army in the south, a point of land surrounded on three sides by the waters of the Chesapeake bay. To the left of this point, as you approach it, James river empties into the bay, leaving these to the left. Passing two other points, you then enter York river, on the left also, and proceed up to York, which lies opposite Gloucester point, where the river is more narrow, but the water very deep.

The first thing attempted by the fleet was to block up York river, to prevent all communication of Cornwallis with the enemy at New-York ; and the next to block the entrance of James river by a sufficient force, to keep up a communication with Lafayette at Williamsburgh, a place lying about midway between these two rivers. It was feared that Cornwallis might discover the circle drawn around him, and profit by the only chance remaining, which was to rush on the force of Lafayette, with his superior numbers, overwhelm him and escape to the Carolinas. Not a moment was lost

to prevent such a catastrophe. Three thousand French troops were immediately embarked in light boats, under the Marquis D'St. Simon, and safely pushed up James river, from whence they speedily effected a junction with his forces.

The English were engaged with indefatigable industry in increasing and strengthening their fortifications, and a heavy siege was anticipated by the allies. In the mean time the characters engaged, like the dramatic personæ of a romance or a play, were all coming forward together to heighten the denouement of the plot.

Three days before the arrival of the Count D'Grasse, D'Barras had made sail from Rhode-Island with four ships of the line, and some frigates or corvettes, and embarked what implements of siege he had been able to collect. With consummate prudence he had stood far out to sea, to avoid the British squadrons in the neighborhood of New-York, had gained the waters of the Bahama Islands, and then bore down for the Chesapeake. Aroused at length from their torpor, the amazed commanders at New-York began to look around them. Nothing could have been calculated to enrage and surprize such a calculating, manœuvring and plotting company, as the being overreached in a manœuvre. Immediate information was despatched to the fleet cruising in the waters of Boston. Admiral Hood too appeared at the entrance of the bay, with fourteen sail of the line, just after the French fleet had stationed themselves there. He had come expecting to join Admiral Graves, and disappointed at not finding him he immediately stood out again, without going far enough in to see the French fleet, and made for Sandy Hook to join him. Admiral Graves had just arrived there from Boston, but as the command now devolved on him as senior officer, he



hastened their departure, and set sail for the Chesapeake ; and all this to overwhelm the four ships of the line and corvettes of Barras, for as yet both of them were profoundly ignorant of the arrival of the Count D'Grasse. But they had no sooner rounded Cape Henry than behold ! the whole French fleet, in all its imposing majesty, lay before them. Twenty-four of those large ships of the line, extending from the Cape to the Bank called the Middle Ground, was not a sight calculated to re-assure the British, foiled as they had been by the manœuvres of Washington, and outwitted by a wily Frenchman, who with his four ships and corvettes had somehow eluded their grasp. Nevertheless, there was but one course to adopt. Fight they must. They were already in the lion's jaws, for the Count D'Grasse at sight of them had quickly slipped his cables and bore down upon them prepared for action. Fifteen hundred of his seamen had been despatched up the James river, to take the reinforcement up to Lafayette, and they had not returned, and their presence was much needed on board the French ships ; but still the superiority was greatly on the French side. A victory was certain ; but sure as it was, it could not be acquired without great slaughter, without an immense loss of life ; and where then might be the people whom he came to serve and to save ? If he preserved his men the victory on land too was certain, and although the Count D'Grasse was one of the bravest men of the age, he was as good as he was brave ; and impelled by these considerations, he resolved not to risk a decisive battle. He bore down, however, and the vans of the two contending parties had a warm contest—200 were killed or wounded on the side of the French, and 336 sailors and marines on the part of the English, with the loss of the “ Terrible,” one of

their largest ships, and four others were so shattered and torn—as to be almost unmanageable. The one they found sinking they set fire to, and night coming on, they were obliged to separate.

The two hostile fleets continued to manœuvre in sight of each other several days, during which Count D'Barras safely ascended the Chesapeake bay, with his squadron and convoy, and then the Count D'Grasse retired into the bay and came to anchor. The English had attempted to send despatches to Cornwallis by two frigates undiscovered, while D'Grasse was in the open sea, but they failed to reach him, and fell into the hands of the French. The English then drew off and made all sail for Sandy Hook.

The stores from Rhode-Island were then unshipped—all the artillery and munitions of war, &c.—and then employed with the light shipping of the fleet in conveying General Washington and his army from Annapolis to the mouth of James river, and thence to Williamsburgh.

An army of 20,000 men now invested Yorktown, while a fleet of near 30 sail of the line blocked up the mouths of both James river and York river. The English had fortified the space of ground they now occupied with the greatest judgment. A chain of redoubts extended across the upper side, curtained together; a morassy ravine extended along the front of these works, and upon this the besieged had erected another large redoubt; in short, the whole place was defended in the best manner possible.

The trenches were opened between the 6th and 7th of October, and while the fire of the besiegers was pouring in upon them, the enemy completed another parallel of batteries, and covered them with little less than 100 pieces of ordnance.

With such force were the shells thrown from

the Americans, that they even reached the ships in the harbor, and one of the British ships of 44 guns was burnt, with several transports. The precision of General Knox, who commanded the artillery, was such as even to astonish the French.

What a scene must the field of battle on the plains of Yorktown have presented that season ! First on their right, a few hundred yards down on the banks of York river, was stationed the gallant light infantry of Virginia, a little further on was Governor Nelson, with a company of militia, while next in order in the chain of circumvallation, was the noble Lafayette at the head of the Rhode-Island and New-Jersey regiments ; next were stationed a company of sappers and miners, then Gen. Knox, then Baron Steuben with the Maryland and Pennsylvania regiments, then a regiment of Virginia, next the Count D'Rochambeau ; about midway of the circle was the main army, commanded by General Washington, and beyond him the French regiments, composing a list of unspeakable names, all except the Marquis de St. Simon, and the Baron de Viosminel, and Dieux Points. Imagine all this, with the lines intersected by French hospitals, and artificers, and laboratories, and magazines, and quartermasters' quarters, &c. &c. and the radii of the circle comprising the field where the British afterwards laid down their arms—imagine all this, and a constant discharge of artillery and shells, and rockets, and no body knows what, darkening the air by day and illuminating it through the night—all this going on through the whole twenty-four hours, for the space of ten days and nights, or nine as Captain Olney proves—and you have some idea of the scene. The place could have been carried by assault doubtless, but the loss of life would have been great, and knowing the enemy were in their

power, the allies determined to save the blood of their troops. Captain Olney makes it nine days only, and we shall by and by prove he was right, though it contradicts history. The siege of Yorktown lasted only nine days.

During this time the British made two efforts to escape. The first was by a sortie, in which they were driven back by the Chevalier D'Noailles, and the second was an experiment of crossing over to Gloucester Point. The corps of M. D'Choisy guarded that place, and they determined to disperse that if possible, and escape into the country situated between the York and Rappahannock rivers, and by keeping so many miles ahead of the allied armies, as they should gain in the course of the night, make their escape. A part of them had already crossed over, when a violent storm of wind and rain commenced, and drove their boats down the river, and at break of day they found themselves obliged to get into their camp again, in worse condition than they left it.

The besiegers had got within 300 yards of them, and they had soon the mortification to find all their batteries upon the left flank dismounted. Washington now gave orders to storm the two advanced redoubts of the enemy. To excite emulation, he committed one to the Americans and one to the French. Lafayette commanded the American detachment, assisted by Colonel Hamilton, one of Washington's aids. In this detachment Captain Olney was included, and we give the remainder in his words.

“After forming our parallel within cannon shot, it was thought necessary to get possession of two of the enemy's redoubts, which projected from their main works, and were situated where it was thought proper to erect our second parallel, in order to level the way; cut off palisades, and beat



down other obstructions. Our artillery were briskly served the 13th of October ; on the 14th the Marquis had orders to storm the redoubt on our right, commanded by a British Major, while the French troops attacked that on our left, which was of greater force, and in their front. Our regiment of light infantry, commanded by Colonel Gimatt, a bold Frenchman, was selected for the assault; and was paraded just after daylight, in front of our works. General Washington made a short address or harangue, admonishing us to act the part of firm and brave soldiers, showing the necessity of accomplishing the object, as the attack on both redoubts depended on our success. I thought then, that his Excellency's knees rather shook, but I have since doubted whether it was not mine."

"The column marched in silence, with guns unloaded, and in good order. Many, no doubt, thinking, that less than one quarter of a mile would finish the journey of life with them. On the march, I had a chance to whisper to several of my men (whom I doubted,) *and told them that I had full confidence that they would act the part of brave soldiers, let what would come* ; and if their guns should be shot away, not to retreat, but take the first man's gun that might be killed. When we had got about half way to the redoubt we were ordered to halt, and detach one man from each company for the forlorn hope. My men all seemed ready to go. The column then moved on ; six or eight pioneers in front, as many of the forlorn hope next, then Colonel Gimatt with five or six volunteers by his side, then my platoon, being the front of the column. When we came near the front of the abatis, the enemy fired a full body of musketry. At this, our men broke silence and huzzaed ; and as the order for silence seemed broken by every one, I

huzzaed with all my power, saying, see how frightened they are, they fire right into the air. The pioneers began to cut off the abatis, which were the trunks of trees with the trunk part fixed in the ground, the limbs made sharp, and pointed towards us. This seemed tedious work, in the dark, within three rods of the enemy; and I ran to the right to look a place to crawl through, but returned in a hurry, without success, fearing the men would get through first; as it happened, I made out to get through about the first, and entered the ditch; and when I found my men to the number of ten or twelve had arrived, I stepped through between two palisades, (one having been shot off to make room,) on to the parapet, and called out in a tone as if there was no danger, Captain Olney's company, form here! On this I had not less than six or eight bayonets pushed at me; I parried as well as I could with my espartoon, but they broke off the blade part, and their bayonets slid along the handle of my espartoon and scaled my fingers; one bayonet pierced my thigh, another stabbed me in the abdomen just above the hip-bone. One fellow fired at me, and I thought the ball took effect in my arm; by the light of his gun I made a thrust with the remains of my espartoon, in order to injure the sight of his eyes; but as it happened, I only made a hard stroke in his forehead. At this instant two of my men, John Strange and Benjamin Bennett, who had loaded their guns while they were in the ditch, came up and fired upon the enemy, who part ran away and some surrendered; so that we entered the redoubt without further opposition."

"My sergeant, Edward Butterick, to whom I was much indebted for his bravery, helped me nearly all this affray; and received a prick of the

enemy's bayonet, in his stomach. Sergeant Brown was also in time, but attempting to load his gun, received a bayonet wound in his hand. Colonel Gimatt was wounded with a musket ball in the foot, about the first fire of the enemy ; and I suppose it took all the volunteers to carry him off, as I never saw any of them afterwards. When most of the regiment had got into the redoubt, I directed them to *form in order*. Major Willis's post being in the rear ; I suppose he got in about the time I was carried away with the wounded."

"My company, which consisted of about forty, suffered the most, (least, probably,) as they had only five or six wounded, all slightly, except Peter Barrows, who had a ball pass through the under jaw ; I believe we had none killed."

"The French suffered much more than we did. I was informed they had eighteen killed, and was half an hour before they took the redoubt, waiting with the column exposed, until the pioneers completely cleared away the obstructions. We made out to crawl through, or get over, and from the enemy's first fire, until we got possession of the redoubt, I think did not exceed ten minutes."

"When my wounds came to be examined, next day, that on my left arm, which gave me most pain when inflicted, was turned black all round, three or four inches in length ; neither skin nor coat broken. The stab in my thigh, was slight, that in front, near my hip, was judged to be mortal, by the surgeons, as a little part of the caul protruded. I was carried to the hospital at Williamsburgh, twelve miles, and in about three weeks my wounds healed, and I joined the regiment. The man who fired on me was brought to the hospital ; I examined the wound I had inflicted with the handle of my espartoon ; it had not injured his eyes, but only made a deep furrow in his

forehead; I asked him how it happened they continued to fight at the place I entered, when most of them on the right had ran away. This I had discovered, by the light of his fire. He said he thought they were all at their posts. I believe they were all half drunk; in this condition, the British soldiers generally fight. We had not been in the redoubt more than five minutes, when Charles M'Afferty, an Irishman, and pretended Freemason, got out a bottle of wine, and invited me to drink. Who but an Irish or Englishman would have thought of such a thing? It reminds us of an expression of Shakspeare, 'Had you such leisure in the pangs of death?'"

No doubt this account of their drunkenness is correct, and it accounts for their prodigality of life, and fighting so like bull-dogs, as they do. Their officers, it appears to us, can never be sober from one month's end to another, if wine will intoxicate. No man who allows himself to drink three or four bottles of wine in a day, can ever know what it is to be sober, for before the fumes of one dose has time to evaporate, another is put down. We have recently conversed with a gentleman who was in the fleet that made an unsuccessful attempt upon one of our maritime cities, (Baltimore,) during the last war, and by his account, every officer on board was drunk, except one, at the time!!

"That part of the British troops who ran out of the redoubt first, must have discovered a party of ours on their right; I presume, that led by Colonel Gimatt. What became of them I did not know, as I discovered none but our party when I formed the regiment. A few days after, I inquired of a soldier, how it happened they did not get into the redoubt. He said, 'the enemy pricked them off with their bayonets.'"

"This was the most hazardous enterprise that



ever fell to my lot ; but my spirits, and those of my men, were not half so much depressed as in other engagements, when we acted on the defensive. The army which acts offensively is most likely to gain the victory, and require the reputation of brave men. When we make an attack, we feel assured of being able to accomplish our design, and are obstinately bent not to give it up. But when attacked, presuppose our enemy superior, and after fighting awhile and find our enemy advancing, give up the contest. It is thought by some, that fifty men may attack the like number in a fort on different quarters, and be sure of victory. However this may be, I had in this attack only four men to help me before the remaining enemy, about fifteen or twenty in number, gave up the redoubt. My two men who fired their guns brought them to this conclusion. I presume the balls had no effect ; but such is the terror of noise in firing gunpowder. I had rather frighten ten men from their post by firing gunpowder, than kill one man who defends himself bravely with his gun and bayonet. I think the front rank of the column in attacking a work like the one above-mentioned, ought to be loaded with buck shot, with orders not to fire until they get on to the parapet ; and the next rank, with spears two feet longer than a gun and bayonet ; the remainder of the column with only a gun and bayonet, without flints or ammunition."

"The first rank I expect would intimidate and kill; the spearmen would be ready to encounter to advantage those who might have courage still to fight ; and the men without ammunition would make up their minds to engage in close quarters, could not load or endanger their fellows, and coming up in the confusion would be sure to gain the

victory unless they had a very obstinate enemy to contend with."

"After taking the redoubt, I was informed that our army commenced making our second parallel. This brought the two contending armies within musket shot of each other. The cannon was briskly served on both sides, until the 16th, and on the 17th, Cornwallis surrendered." History says he surrendered on the 19th.

The British, aware that they could hold out no longer when the second parallel should be included, were driven to desperation. It was on the night succeeding that they made the attempt to cross over to Gloucester Point. The circle by which they were surrounded was drawing closer and closer, and their own quarters, to which they were now driven, had become extremely circumscribed. Failing in this, they resolved the next to negotiate with the allied armies, and procure as honorable terms of capitulation as possible. Crafty to the last, they demanded the most unreasonable indulgences—first a truce for 24 hours. This Washington promptly refused, and allowed only two to dispose of the business in. Cornwallis then demanded his men might be allowed to return to Europe, the Germans to their country and the English to theirs. This was promptly refused. He demanded besides the "regulation of the interests" of those loyalists who had followed his fortunes. This too was refused. But to the request that the sloop Bonnetta should be allowed to go to New-York, with a few passengers, the number being agreed upon, without search, and the persons being accounted for as prisoners upon exchange, the commander agreed, probably on purpose to avoid the terrible necessity of hanging some score or more of his own countrymen.

The sloop *Bonnetta* returned, and was delivered up to the French, to whom their shipping and naval munitions were given, as their part. Their flotilla consisted of two large frigates, and 20 transports—20 had been burnt by the French and Americans during the siege.

The number of land forces delivered up to the Americans was between 7 and 8000, 2000 of whom were wounded. Five hundred and fifty had been slain in their intrenchments. Of the number of marines slain, which must have been considerable, there is no account. History merely records, that those who remained were given up to the French, with the shipping, &c. ; and Capt. Olney did not know, probably, as he makes no mention of it.

The Americans had the field artillery, consisting of 160 pieces of cannon, the greater part brass, and eight mortars. The Americans and French lost during this siege, 450 in killed and wounded.

It has been related to the writer of this, that the British officers just about to come out insisted upon marching out with the honors of war, when the commander in chief was appealed to, who wrote on a slip of paper, "march out as General Lincoln did, when he surrendered to your countrymen." Memory does not supply us with the circumstances of this humiliation, but we recollect there was something peculiarly mortifying in it, and whatever it was, the prisoners on this occasion had to go through the same.

It is a source of pride and pleasure to every American to reflect, that distant ages as they read this page of our history, and mentally ask the question, "and how did these conquerors deport themselves? what revenge did they take for the murdered thousands of their countrymen, shut up in loathsome dungeons and prison ships? for the

11,000 who perished in the "Jersey," for the inhabitants of slaughtered towns, for the 1600 carried to Halifax and starved to death, for the slaughtered inhabitants of New-London, for the brave defenders of fort Griswold, put to the sword, in cold blood, after they had surrendered? (the last, even within this very month, by orders from Gen. Clinton, in order to divert the besiegers from New-York.) Did they put the garrison of York to the sword? By the laws of reprisals, of retaliation they would have been justified. Or did they content themselves with a general robbery of private as well as public property, with starving and immuring them a while and send them home naked and diseased?" No. We say that it is a source of pride and pleasure, and let us add, of gratitude, that when this question suggests itself the answer will be found on the page of history. So far from robbing, private property was not only respected, but the French made the English offers of money, both in public and private, and endeavored to console the vanquished by every mark of sympathizing interest. The prisoners were conducted to the interior of the country.

The great command is not, do unto others as they do to you, but "as you would have them do unto you;" and if a nation, founded in righteousness, shall stand, we may hope that our fair Republic shall last long after kings and empires shall have fought each other off of the face of the earth. Four days after the surrender of Cornwallis, General Clinton arrived from Rhode-Island, with a fleet of 24 sail of the line, and hearing of the surrender, off Cape Henry, he turned about, and with grief of heart retraced his way back to Rhode-Island.



## CHAPTER XIV.

THE military life of Captain Olney ceased with the expiration of the siege of Yorktown, although he did not lay down his commission immediately, or not until March 1782. True, there was not much active service afterwards. The capture of Cornwallis sealed the fate of the contest. But Captain Olney, it is to be regretted, left the army with somewhat unpleasant feelings ; but we will let him tell the story himself. He says,

“The next day after storming the redoubt, the Marquis Lafayette complimented the regiment for their bravery, and said he was sorry for the misfortune of Captains Hunt and Olney. Captain Hunt was next in rank to me, and brought up the rear, and happened to hit his ancle against a bayonet fixed to a gun lying on the ground. Some of my brother officers informed me of this order, and the placing our names contrary to the uniform established practice, and as I had suffered from the enemy’s guns in front of battle, they considered it as an imposition. I was lying in my tent, very sore and lame, but this intelligence nearly deprived me of the sense of pain. I wrote to the Marquis to know how it happened he mentioned the wounded officers in that order ? He, by letter, informed me he mentioned them in the order the Adjutant had given them to him.”

The real letter of Lafayette is in our possession among his papers, and is as follows :

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I was much employed yesterday in receiving the British army, and am so much so at this time

in writing despatches for France, that I am prevented from writing you a long letter. I mentioned the names of the wounded officers in the division orders, as they were given to me by the Brigadier. In my report to the General, in particular I mentioned your name, and I make no doubt but it will be mentioned to Congress, in the highest terms. I have the highest regard for your gallantry on the occasion—and shall be always happy to render you my services, and a testimony to the merit you are so justly entitled to.

I have the honor to be

Your most obt. humble servt.

LAFAYETTE.

*Head-Quarters, Yorktown,  
October 18, 1781."*

If this date be correct, the siege of Yorktown did not hold out so long by two day as the history of the revolution asserts.

Captain Olney proceeds, "I inquired of the Adjutant, who was a Lieutenant in Captain Hunt's company. He denied misplacing our names, but I shall always think he did, either by mistake or design."

"A day or two after, Colonel Gimatt told me the Marquis was very sorry for the mistake, and directed him to inform me he would issue any order I might think proper, to give satisfaction. I could only say, *let it go, the day is past.*"

"In the army," continues Capt. Olney, "there are some who make it their business to pull down the character of others so much easier than to build up their own. From this time, I made up my mind not to fight many more battles, but leave it to those who were inclined to a military profession. In fact at this time most of the officers were so inclined, but believing there would be but

little or no more real service, and by continuing to the end, Congress might be influenced to make them some remuneration for their service, they remained. I did not believe my country was then able to satisfy their demands, and as to half pay, it seemed to me deviating from what we first sat out upon, viz. no sinecure or half-pay offices."

"Being in the 27th year of my age, having served my country through all her dark days of adversity, and in all situations of danger that fell to my lot, having acquitted myself much better than I could have expected, to the satisfaction of my superiors, and expecting no reward but the Independence and liberty of my country, it seemed necessary now to take some other calling to provide for a growing family and old age. After quartering with my regiment at Philadelphia in March 1781, I resigned my commission."

Here ends the manuscript of Captain Olney, and it is painful to reflect, that after a course of so much firmness and bravery, he should have thrown up his commission under the writhings of a wounded spirit. That the little omission of military etiquette should have disturbed his peace so much, is greatly to be lamented; and still more is it that the expression of his chagrin should have given offence; but although his name was from accident omitted in its proper place, in the report, yet it is easy to perceive that neglect might have been atoned for afterwards, and certainly ought to have been, by his promotion; and we are constrained to believe as he himself did, that he had some secret enemy at work, who prevented his advancement; and yet it is difficult to conceive how the discerning eye of Washington could have been deceived by the representations of such persons, and we must leave it as among those mysteries which will never be cleared up in this world. The

throwing up of his commission, at the time he did it, was evidently a mistake, it being so plain that the war was then drawing towards a conclusion.

After this, Captain Olney retired to the shades of private life, and sat himself down to the cultivation of his farm. His townsmen, however, would not permit him to remain in obscurity, and they manifested their gratitude for his services by electing him their Representative for many years in the State Legislature, and President of the Town-Council, both of which offices he filled with honor to himself and acceptance to the people. Through all his life, he seems to have cherished the warmest regard for the commander in chief of the American armies, and for General Lafayette.

The month in which he threw up his commission, his third child, a daughter, was born; in 1784, a son, whom he called Alfred; another daughter in 1787; and on the 25th of April 1789, a son, whom he called George Washington, and in his family Bible he mentions that this son was born just two days after General Washington arrived at New-York to exercise his office of President of the United States. He had a son whom he called John, who was born on the 12th of Oct. 1791, and another, his last child, whom he called David Adams, born in 1798.

When Lafayette visited the United States, in 1824, Captain Olney was not forgotten. A play was got up in the city of New-York, in honor of the nation's guest, entitled the "Siege of Yorktown, in which Capt. Olney was made to appear as a prominent character, and it was performed before the General; and when he was triumphantly escorted through the streets of our own city of Providence, upon alighting at the State-house, he was met on the steps by Captain Olney, whom he instantly recognised, and, with all the



warmth of French feeling, folded in his arms, kissing him on each cheek, and so melting was the scene, that among the many hundreds who witnessed this honest and patriotic effusion of tenderness, scarce a dry eye was to be seen.

In his house and about every thing one might discover a military predilection. There was some remembrance of the war of the revolution every where.

To our great regret we have not been able to obtain the muster-roll of Capt. Olney's company, but the following names found among his papers, must have comprised a large part of them, before the battle of Yorktown. They are signed to a receipt for payment of depreciation of their wages, one quarter part of which they acknowledge to have received on the 31st of July 1781, three months before the siege of Yorktown, and it appears by this receipt that the depreciation in three years and seven months was, to a private soldier, 58 pounds sterling. A quarter only was received at this time. It is dated at the "Camp of Malbern's Hills, July 31st, 1781."

*List of names in Captain Stephen Olney's Company.*

B. J. Peckham,	Lieutenant, w.
Thomas T. Brown,	Sergeant, w.
Edward Butterick,	do.
Hosea Crandal,	do.
Joseph Wheaton,	Lieutenant.
Arther Clossen,	Corporal.
Edward Champlain,	Private.
Joseph Congdon,	do.
John Rhodes,	do.
Sylvester Woodman,	do.
Souliot Langworthy,	do.
Zebulon Screvens,	do. w.

Samuel Thompson, Private.

Abraham Rose, of N. H. do.

James Ogg, do.

James Pollard, do.

John Saunders, do.

John Thomas, do.

Jotham Bennis, do.

John Chadwick, do.

Farmin Dye, do.

Durfey Springer, do.

John Randall, do.

Peter Barrows, do.

Franklin Tenant, do.

Uriah Jones, do.

John Strange, do.

Joshua Smith, do.

Benjamin Blanchard, do.

John Chilson, do.

William Bennet, do.

Nathan West, Fifer.

David Edwards, Private.

Benjamin Bickford, Sergeant.

Charles M'Afferty, Private.

Benjamin Jackson, do.

Benjamin Bennet, do.

Mathew Hart, do.

Samuel Gear, do.

N. B.—Those with a w. set against their names were wounded at Yorktown, October 14th, 1781.

*Attest to the above,*

B. R. PECKHAM, *Lieutenant.*

It is a circumstance much to be lamented, that the brave defenders of our country's rights could not have received their pensions at an earlier season, while the prospect of a few years of rest from

the cares of business and the enjoyment of a competence was before them. Captain Olney did not obtain a pension until May 28th, 1830, and he lived only two years and a half afterwards, the act passed in May 1828, for the relief of those who served until the end of the war, not extending to his case.

The following letter, written by him to the Hon. Dutee J. Pearce, will explain his own views respecting his services. Mr. Pearce had advised him "to petition," as the only way, since the fourth section of that act excluded him.

" JOHNSTON, December 29, 1828.

" DEAR SIR,

" As proposed when I saw you at Providence, I have sent to Mr. Burges a petition to Congress. As he is left out of the committee to whom such petitions are referred, and as all the officers of the revolution are provided for who might have had powerful friends in Congress, I am fearful of the result, unless you and all my friends from this State will be so kind as to use your best influence in my favor. If the merits of my claim were not far superior to many others who now rejoice by means of the liberality of their country, I never should have troubled Congress; I am confirmed in this opinion by some of our most respectable men, who are no flatterers, and who make their comparison from the best samples, upon reflection of what I have done and suffered, and what I have received. It took me several months to form and put on the poor habits of a soldier; I was about six years and ten months in the army; it took me one year to discard the habits of a soldier, and put on those of a farmer; all this makes eight years of the best part of life. For all this time I did not receive more than 150 or \$200, more than

a poor living for myself only. My petition enumerates the principal causes that induced me to leave the army. A circumstance happened at the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown, which had an effect to this step, and materially damped the cheerfulness and spirit with which I had heretofore served my country. It was this, in storming the enemy's redoubt, after my Colonel, Gimatt, was wounded by a ball at the abatis and carried off by volunteers and others who preferred that course, it was my post to be at the head of the column, and on the enemy's breast works, received three bayonet wounds in front, besides some scratches on my hands with the same weapons; being in a hurry, these did not alter my course, or slacken me speed; but in a few minutes I formed my company within the enemy's redoubt, and becoming lame was carried off wounded. Captain Hunt next to me in command brought up the rear, and when coming into the works hit his ankle against a bayonet fixed on a gun and received a slight wound.

In the orders of next day, the Marquis Lafayette, after extolling the bravery of the troops, said he was sorry for the misfortune of Captains Hunt and Olney; this seemed to me the most provoking neglect I ever met with; the Marquis said he mentioned the names of the officers as returned to him; that he would do any thing I might wish to set the matter right; (it seemed to me a difficult case) the Brigade-Major denied misplacing our names, notwithstanding which, I believe he did either through mistake or design, as he belonged to Capt. Hunt's company.

There is in the army as elsewhere, a set of miscreants who if they cannot build up themselves, will be seeking to pull down all above them. Believing it would never be in my power to behave



any better, or be more deserving of honor, and if I continued longer, might commit some error, which would damp the pleasing reflection, that I had served my country with fidelity and honor to the best of my abilities, I resigned. Besides, I began to think my fate was fixed like that of the dwarf in his copartnership with the giant, I should get all the blows and wounds and others the reward and honor. I have wrote to Messrs. Robbins, Knight and Burges, and consider my letters as common stock, not equal to that of the old Gloucester Bank. I hope you will pardon all amiss; we old soldiers are apt to be very prolix.

With sentiments of esteem and respect,

Yours,

STEPHEN OLNEY.

HON. DUTY J. PEARCE.

The first wife of Captain Olney, and mother of his children, died on 13th of December 1813. About the year 1826, Captain Olney married a widow lady in Johnston, R. I. and in accordance with her earnest wishes resided with her on her farm in Johnston, for the last years of his life. His letter to Mr. Pearce, it will be observed, was dated at that place. Mr. Pearce was on the committee, and endeavored to serve him all in his power, knowing him intimately, and above all realizing the importance of his services during the momentous contest for independence. Through his good offices the petition was favorably reported on, but for some reason or other it was not granted until some time after. On March 25th, 1830, he addressed the following letter to Mr. Burges. That gentleman, together with Mr. Pearce, did not fail to make fresh efforts, and at length, principally through the interposition of the

latter, he being on the committee, the prayer of the petition was granted.

It is due to Mr. Pearce to say, that on this as well as on other occasions, while filling the important station he held, he made great exertions for his native State. It was not only for the aged defenders of our soil that they were used, but for the interests and prosperity of this section of the country generally, and the resuscitation of Newport may in a very great measure be ascribed to his exertions in calling the attention of the government to that station ; and he carries with him into retirement the pleasing consciousness of having contributed to so important and desirable an object.

The following is the copy of the letter to Mr. Burges, and of the act passed on the 28th of May, by which the last years of the venerable hero (and a very brief space it was) were made more comfortable, and above all bestowed the pleasing assurance that his country was not unmindful of his services.

“ JOHNSTON, March 25th, 1830.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I was honored with your favor of December 11th, in due time. Not having heard respecting the fate of my petition, I am apprehensive there are some objections to encounter. The report of the committee of the House last session being in favor, I had hopes it would have passed without opposition. My case being singular, and my services so near similar to those officers who served till peace, that I could not help entertaining the pleasing hopes that Congress, in their liberality, would grant me the like remuneration, the pay to commence when theirs did. My age and infirmi-

ties admonish me that anticipation is the only mode by which I can feel the bounty, and this measurably in the cheerful reflection that Congress have estimated my services worthy of reward, and enabled me to support myself, and therefore relieve my children who ought to provide for themselves against old age. I am in the 75th year of my age, in health except disabled with a cancer tumor in one arm, which was extracted by Dr. Miller last winter, and seems to be growing again, so that I am in that class of soldiers recommended by the President to be provided for. I have eight children, and twenty-six grand-children. My property is real estate, and will rent for about \$400. From this source comes the support of myself and family, and two sons with their families, making a total of twenty. You will see by this that we do not live extravagantly, and that any grant Congress may please to make me, will not infringe our republican institutions. I am very loath, my dear sir, to intrude on your time, as it appears to me the public exigences require the best exertion of every good man in Congress. But as a solitary individual, to be forgotten or neglected by my country, when she knows my best and unwearied exertions were afforded her in all the trying times of her distress, and that about the last blood to seal her independence was freely shed from my veins, is more than I am willing should fall to my lot, especially when I compare my services with some others who have always lived at the public charge, and were liberally provided for last session. I expect that those who are against any further provision for the survivors of the revolutionary army will defeat the measure, either by professing to make the grant too extensive, or by finding other business for Congress.

Pardon the prolixity of this letter, and all amiss. The many blunders and mistakes incident to my life have produced such diffidence, that even in politics I am not confident of being right, though many men of the most good sense are of the same opinion,

Be assured, dear sir, that I am, with sentiments of esteem and respect, your obedient servant.

STEPHEN OLNEY.

HON. TRISTAM BURGESS."

### AN ACT for the relief of Stephen Olney.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the benefits of the provisions of the act, entitled "An act for the relief of certain surviving officers and soldiers of the Army of the Revolution," passed May the fifteenth, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight, be extended to Stephen Olney, of Rhode-Island, a captain in the Army of the Revolution, and that he be paid and accounted with in the same manner as if he had already, at any time heretofore, since the passage of said act, complied with all the requisitions of the fourth section thereof, to be paid out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated. [Approved, May 28, 1830.]

The pension was obtained, but the sands of life with him who had obtained it, were now running low. The disease of which he speaks in the letter, returned, and he was compelled to lose his arm by it.

It was remarked by a friend who was with him on this painful occasion, "that there was a manifest difference when the fever of excitement was on and when it was off. He who was forcibly led



off the battle ground after being twice wounded, and run through the body, fainted twice at the amputation of an arm." Even this painful operation did not save him. He kept about some months after, but his life seemed ebbing away. A short time before his death, he was carried back to his farm, his early home, by his own request, and died there. His widow survived him only two years.

Captain Stephen Olney departed this life on the 23d of November 1832, aged 77 years, and was buried on his own farm in North-Providence, where his fathers sleep. A plain slate stone records his name, and gives a brief history of his services during the revolution. It was penned by one of the principal men of his town, Mr. Olney Winsor, a dear and intimate friend of his, and one of his kindest and best neighbors, and adds the attestation of his high acceptance in the various offices he was called to fill in his native State. His descendants generally reside in the State of Rhode-Island. One of his sons preceded him to eternity. One of them now resides in the western part of the State of New-York, and one at Fall River, Mass. His youngest daughter, Mary, married a Mr. King, of Johnston, and to him and Mr. David A. Olney, of Fall River, the compiler of this narrative is indebted for the bequest of his papers. For although Captain Olney expressed the desire to have Mrs. Williams write his life, yet as he had already given the manuscript history of his campaigns to Mr. King, he could not recal the gift, and it was therefore optional with him to give or withhold them.

The following is an extract from a notice of his death which appeared in the Providence Journal :

*“ Another Hero and Patriot of the Revolution departed !*

“ The death of Capt. Stephen Olney, of North Providence, at the advanced period of 77 years, has already been announced : but there is a debt of reverence and gratitude due to the memory of this gallant officer, which would be very imperfectly discharged by the brief mention of his age and his decease. His life and services belong to the history and are associated with the honor of the State. His name will be mentioned with a feeling of just pride, whenever the acts and the men of the Revolution shall be recalled to the minds of our successors ; and at no time since the commencement of our national existence was it ever of greater importance than at present, to recur to the principles and conduct which insured the independence of America, and to derive lessons of patriotism from the lives of the illustrious dead, who yet speak through the record of their devoted services, and enjoin upon us to maintain that freedom and those republican institutions for which their blood was shed.

“ He was in the best and highest sense of the words, a Patriot and a Republican, devotedly attached to our national institutions and interests, for which, in his younger days, he had so often been ready to make the sacrifice of his life. He constantly toiled with his own hands, and the testimony of his untiring industry and perseverance, and sterling integrity, is fresh in the remembrance of all who knew him. To all who have ever seen his intelligent countenance and who have heard his graphic descriptions of the numerous engagements in which he participated, and his own feelings in battle, especially among the palisades, and

on the parapet of Yorktown, the memory of the departed will be as enduring as the admiration of valor, and the love of country.

“The funeral was solemnized at his late residence, in North Providence, on Monday, 26th ultimo. To the other services was added an address from the Rev. Mr. Farley, of Providence, who recalled to the numerous assembly present, among whom were some of his aged brethren in arms, in an appropriate and impressive manner, the character and merits of the deceased. His remains were interred in the family burying ground on the estate. His name is gathered to the honored Treasury of the American Dead. And let that treasury, to which will so soon be added the venerable remnant of our Revolutionary Heroes, be sealed with the deep impress of National gratitude, and become, throughout all future generations, the consecrated pledge of the Freedom and the Union of our Country.”

## A P P E N D I X .

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### Note A.

Many little minute circumstances in the life of Captain Olney, might be narrated, highly interesting, which modesty alone prevented his relating. Since writing his life, several have been mentioned ; and one which still adds to the wonder that this brave man should have been overlooked in the promotions which followed the siege of Yorktown. The first time he met Lafayette after that siege, the General, apprised of the part he had acted, clasped him in his arms and shed tears of emotion.

The wound which Captain Olney received in the abdomen at that siege, was so severe that he had to hold his bowels in by pressing both his hands, while giving the last orders to those intrepid spirits who had followed him into the redoubt. He merely mentions that "the wound was judged to be mortal, as a small part of the caul protruded."

During the short time he was on the parapet a pistol was aimed at his head by one of the British close by ; which, had it discharged, must have caused his death, it being held close to his ear. A private soldier, named John Strange, whom he mentions in his journal, and who was the third that entered the redoubt, struck down the arm of



the person who held the pistol. The blow was given with such force that the English soldier lost his arm. Strange was a drummer in Captain Olney's company.

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### Note B.

Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, who is so often mentioned in the first part of Captain Olney's journal, was a very meritorious officer, and died at a time when his services were much needed. Captain Olney does not mention the time of his death, which occurred in Morristown, N. J. and was caused by peripneumony.

The fatigue of that campaign killed him, in fact. The heat had been excessive, and in New-Jersey, the seat of constant warfare, of continual alarm, of horrible excesses of the enemy, the excitement was constant, the marchings and countermarchings continual, and the constitution of Col. Hitchcock sunk under excessive suffering and exertion. Israel Angel succeeded him, and Jeremiah Olney was Lieutenant-Colonel. In the early part of the contest, there had been a difficulty in the exchange of prisoners, owing to a want of officers, bearing this title, in the American army; an agreement had at length been made between the contending parties, by commissioners from both, who met in New-Jersey; to exchange one Major and a Captain, for every Lieutenant-Colonel, or two Captains. Congress, however, saw some difficulty in this, and remedied it by creating such an office in our army.

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### Note C.

In the Rhode-Island regiment, from the county of Providence, with which Stephen Olney went to

Roxbury, there were many who then held inferior offices that afterwards obtained great celebrity in the country ; among many others we observe the name of Cyrus Talbot, the person mentioned in the notes to the life of Barton, who with a small sloop surprized and captured a British row-galley of 32 guns, in Seconnett river, and carried her safely into Stonington. This Captain Talbot actually performed prodigies of valor during the war ; he was one of those persons who emphatically make themselves, being originally, a poor apprentice boy, from Dighton, (Mass.) to Colonel Zephaniah Andrews, of Providence, at the stone-cutting business. He went to Roxbury as a Lieutenant, first, and was afterwards in Sullivan's expedition. While in the neighborhood of Tiverton, he accomplished the feat mentioned above, for which the State of Rhode-Island voted him an elegant silver-hilted sword ; and Congress promoted him. On Rhode-Island, he performed a curious feat, by riding round into a cross road, where were some British soldiers, tending a gun. He came round in such a direction, and accosted them in such an authoritative manner, asking them what they were doing, that they mistook him, as he meant they should, for one of their own officers ; and telling them they were out of order, and their position unauthorized, he demanded their swords, which they, in considerable trepidation, immediately gave up ; so, putting the swords under his arm, he drove them on towards Bristol Ferry. They began to stare at last, when he said to them, " you are prisoners—march on." " By my faith," said one of the trio, looking round, " I have been thinking so, some time." He succeeded in getting them safely off the island.

The forte of Colonel Talbot, however, seemed

to be the sea service ; and after his feat in the Seconnett River, he was appointed to take command of a sloop of war, called the Argos ; in this, he cruised very successfully. At that time there was one Stanton Hazard, a refugee tory, who was sailing under British colors, and robbing and murdering his own countrymen, under the name of *loyalty* ; he had often boastingly said he wished he could encounter Talbot ; and at length, his wish was accomplished ; they had a severe battle, off Newport, which resulted in a complete victory on the part of the American commander. Talbot took the English ship and carried her safe into New-Bedford, not willing to run the risk of trying to get her up to Providence.

The taking of the traitor Hazard, afforded very general joy at that time, particularly to General Gates, who was then in Providence, and who seemed to be in extacies on the occasion.

After this, Colonel Talbot continued to cruise on our waters, with much success, until the North River being hemmed in by the enemy, he had to burn his ship to prevent its falling into their hands ; and his own escape was almost a miracle, as he barely escaped burning with her. A curious anecdote is related of him ; in one of his cruises, being hailed by the commander of a British ship of war, and asked who the Argos was commanded by, he replied, "Colonel Talbot." "What's that?" said the Englishman. "It's the first time I ever heard of a ship of war being commanded by a *Colonel*."

After the war, Colonel Talbot commanded the squadron, near St. Domingo, sent to protect our commerce ; there, at the time of the insurrection, considerable American property was rescued, and many French families escaped to our country in American vessels, at that time ; about eighty persons were brought into Providence alone, nearly

all of whom were destitute, and were, by a vote of the council, provided with a place of residence in the town, and rations, until they found it convenient to provide for themselves. It was a great satisfaction to the American people to be able to assist some of the French nation, after the debt of gratitude we owed them.

Colonel Talbot was at one time during the war, the aid of General Greene ; and his hearty co-operation with that distinguished commander, was thought to have been of essential service. He married a Miss Richmond, of Providence, sister of William Richmond Esq. for his first wife ; and subsequently, a sister of Governor Mifflin, of Pennsylvania ; and settled down in New-York State, where he purchased the place formerly the residence of Sir John Johnston ; for many years before his death, he was a member of Congress ; and though not a speaker, an exceedingly useful and efficient member, being on all the committees on naval affairs.

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#### Note D.

*The battle of Red Bank.*—It has often been observed that a very great proportion of our soldiers in the revolutionary war were very young. There is a soldier now living, a pensioner in Greenwich, James Miller by name, commissioned officer, who fought in defending that fort, who informed us that one third of the defenders of that fort were mere boys, not more than sixteen, years of age, and some under.

This James Miller was the person who had command of the small force stationed on Prudence Island, in Narragansett Bay, at the time of the descent of the British led by Wallace. He was then



only an ensign, in the regiment commanded by Col. William Richmond, of Little Compton. He states there were about fifty soldiers put there to guard it, collect stores, &c. and that the British who attacked it were 300. History says 250 ; there was, he says, a very considerable quantity of hay collected, which he ordered set fire to when he saw the enemy approaching, supposing it a foraging party, he and his little band had the temerity to fire on them, which as he said did no good, and only probably provoked a return, when one of their company, Williams by name, was shot through the breast, the ball passing directly under the breast bone, went in one side and came out the other. The monsters who took him prisoner, could not be satisfied without laying his head open with a cutlass, and then dragged him to their ships.

Night coming on, Miller and his company made their escape to Warwick Neck ; the enemy then commenced their depredations, and as the blaze of the burning buildings rose towering high, and threw its red glare over the waters of Narragansett Bay, it was seen on every side for many a mile around, and soldiers collected from various quarters. Colonel William Barton, with sixty minute men, immediately crossed over, and was the first who landed, at day break, and commenced a skirmish with the enemy. The little force under Miller immediately crossed back again, and followed close in their wake, and other companies in considerable numbers were seen coming to the rescue, but Barton drove them to their ships before they got to his assistance.

It was never ascertained how many were killed or wounded, but from the traces of blood it was supposed the enemy suffered some loss in their retreat, pursued as they were by an incessant fire to

their ships. Very soon after on that day, 500 American soldiers were on the island, but alas, too late to save the property of the suffering and houseless inhabitants. The unfortunate Williams, notwithstanding his dreadful wounds, lived to be exchanged, but owing to the hacking of his skull, was bereft of his reason for the remainder of his days.

We were not aware until since the life of Barton was in type, that he had the honor of a skirmish with Wallace, as well as Prescott.

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#### Note E.

*New-York.*—While in possession of the enemy, every enormity was perpetrated that could be thought of, upon the persons of those suspected of being friends of liberty. The most trivial excuses served to send them off to Halifax, or immure them in some loathsome prison, or that most horrible of all dungeons, the Jersey. In going about on their lawful occasions there was no security whatever. The same was practiced in Newport, R. I.; those who were known to be favorable to the American cause, *or not known to be tories*, were persecuted with a bitterness of malice, unworthy of soldiers, of any nation, watched if they stepped abroad, and seized on the most frivolous pretexts, and perhaps sent to a great distance. Among a great many instances of this sort, narrated too, come immediately to our recollection.

A Mr. John Hubbard, and Eleazer Read, two persons who resided near the head of Broad-street, and were the principal proprietors of the wind-mills in that region; they were in the habit of

procuring corn around the bay, for their mill, and bringing it in a little sail-boat ; of course, they supplied the British and all, when it was ground. This was done often ; but one day they were seized in coming over from Canonicut, an island just opposite the town of Newport, and then garrisoned by British soldiers ; that it was impossible for them to have held any communication with the Americans there, or in crossing over, the river being filled with British ships ; though this was the pretext, both were seized and put on board the prison-ship in the harbor.

The greatest consternation was manifested in Newport ; people found it almost hazardous to step out of doors. Intercession was immediately made for their liberation ; and even by their wives. Mrs. Hubbard, ventured to the prison-ship herself, to procure the enlargement of her husband. But they were inexorable ; and for fear something might occur to compel their liberation, hurried them off the next day with a company of others, kidnapped, to Halifax. Before they went on shore these two persons had resolved to escape, or die ; and while the ship lay at anchor off the port, waiting for advices from shore, they contrived to escape and get over on the opposite side. By what means they obtained the boat by which they effected their escape, or the particulars of their adventures, are not now known ; but they travelled home on foot from the eastern extremity of the United States, begging their bread, until they got to Boston, where, being known, they borrowed money for the remainder of their journey. After this, Mr. Hubbard had his family moved to Providence, where they remained until after the evacuation of the town ; but the enemy had pulled down his house and made fire wood of it, and destroyed most of his property. So that from being

in very easy circumstances, he found himself, after three years, a poor man. Eleazer Read fared better ; he went boldly back and took care of his property.

Eleazer Read was an uncle of Captain Oliver Read, of Newport, and Mr. Hubbard was the person who gave a certificate on the life of Captain Read, and who lived to be upwards of 90 years of age.

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#### Note F.

*Washington.*—Perhaps the immortal Commander in Chief of the French and American armies never appeared to greater advantage than when he passed over to Newport to review the French forces under Count Rochambeau. Gen. Washington and his suite went over from Canonicut, and were received at the head of Long-wharf by the French officers at the head of 7000 men, who lined the streets from thence to the court-house.

“I never,” says a bystander, now living, (1839,) “felt the solid earth tremble under me before. The firing from the French ships that lined the harbor, was tremendous ; it was one continued roar, and looked as though the very river was on fire. Washington, as you know, was a Marshal of France ; he could not command the French army without being invested with that title. He wore on this day the insignia of his office, and was received with all the honors due to one in that capacity. It is known that many of the flower of the French nobility were numbered in the army that acted in our defence.”

“Never,” said the aged narrator, “will the scene be erased from my memory. The attitude of the nobles, their deep obeisance, the lifting of



hats and caps, the waving of standards, the sea of plumes, the long line of French soldiers, and the general disposition of their arms, unique to us, separating to the right and left, the Chief, with Count Rochambeau on his left, unbonnetted, walked through. The French nobles, commanders, and then under officers followed in the wake. Count Rochambeau was a small, keen looking man, not handsome as was his son, afterwards Governor of Martinico. Count Noailles looked like, what he was, a great man. He made a noble appearance there, as did also a Prussian Baron and Polish Count, officers of high standing in the army, who walked next. But the resplendent beauty of the two Viosminels eclipsed all the rest. They were brothers, and one of them a General in the army, who bore the title of Count too. Newport never saw any thing so handsome as those two young brothers."

"I thought," said the enthusiastic narrator, as the breeze of morning lifted the shining curls from the fair forehead of the elder Viosminil, and discovered the sparkling eyes, and blooming cheeks, and wonderfully fine mouth, "that nothing could surpass him, but when I looked at his brother I was puzzled to tell which was the handsomest. Both were of commanding height and well proportioned, as were very many of those who accompanied them. But we the populace were the only ones that looked at them, for the eye of every Frenchman was directed to Washington."

"Calm and unmoved by all the honors that surrounded him, the voice of adulation nor the din of battle had never disturbed the equanimity of his deportment. Ever dignified, he wore on this day the same saint-like expression that always characterized him. There were other officers of inferior grade too that followed, and I afterwards saw

them all on horseback, but they did not set on a horse like Washington, or to bring a comparison down to your time, like General Jackson. I must say of the French, I do not think horsemanship their fort."

"Well, they proceeded to the Court or State house, and from thence to the lodgings of Count Rochambeau, down what is now called Spring street, proceeded by the "Pioneers," a company armed only with axes, held up straight before their faces, with the edge outwards. It was amusing to see how far these fellows would roll their eyes to catch a glimpse of Washington, for they dared as well die as turn their heads one inch."

"The roofs and windows of every house in sight were filled with the fair part of creation, and oh! the fluttering of handkerchiefs and showering of favors! It was a proud day for Newport!"

A proud day indeed! She that had sat in the dust for three long years—she that had been made bare and desolate, that had seen her fields laid waste, and her sons dragged into captivity—she that had drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury, yea, drank the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out! It was fitting this triumph should be hers.

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#### Note G.

*Paper Money.*—The remark respecting paper money on page 162 must have been misplaced, and owing to their not being all paged in the manuscript, it was a work of no small moment to get them regulated. The paragraph in question, we feel convinced, must have belonged to the history of a later campaign, as there was no continental bills then in circulation, to which he must have referred.

## Note H.

Nothing has given our old soldiers more pleasure than chancing to meet each other after the lapse of years ; many singular and romantic incidents of this nature have occurred at the various pension offices, within a few years ; one of them within our memory, at the office in this city, we cannot forbear to mention, though unfortunately the names are forgotten.

An old soldier went to claim his pension, and in his narration mentioned he had been a prisoner in the guard-ship off Newport at one time, during the war, and that the horrors of their confinement and fare were such, himself with a comrade, a New-Hampshire man, had resolved to escape or die ; they combined an excuse to be brought on deck after dark, knock down the guard, and swim for the shore, about three-quarters of a mile distant. This they effected in part, as the narrator actually reached it, and waited some time for his comrade, who however came not, and from that hour he never saw him, nor never expected to, as he was undoubtedly drowned. He went to a house, where his wants were supplied, and his entire escape was effected.

Another pensioner who had listened with much emotion in a corner of the office, to the story of the Connecticut soldier, now rushed forward, and clasping the narrator, exclaimed "I am he, don't you know me?" He was soon recognised, and the joyful meeting was a most interesting season to bystanders, as well as actors.

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## Note I.

*French in Rhode-Island.*—Among the number of those whose politeness and urbanity in private life, and his distinguished patriotism in public, had

justly endeared him to the whole country, was the Duke D'Luzan, or as he was sometimes called, Chevelier. He was remarkably elegant and of noble presence ; and some of the ladies in Rhode-Island danced with him at the balls in Newport and Providence, and who are still living, remember him with much interest—his companions in arms and in council, with still greater. His melancholy death, after a life of such great enterprise in the cause of freedom in our country, was much deplored. He suffered decapitation in the revolution in France, as the Duke D'Byron, which title he received on the death of his father, some years after quitting our shores. How many have exclaimed, “ Oh ! if he could but have renounced the dream of grandeur and continued with us ! ”

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#### Note J.

##### *Communications of the enemy with their government.*

It was the opinion of Captain Olney that the British nation in general, were kept in profound ignorance of the transactions of their armies on this side of the water ; and that when the whole history of the Revolution should come to be known in England, it would excite as much horror there as in any country in Europe. How far he and many others, who thought with him was correct, we have no means of knowing, but we recollect a circumstance that induces the belief that the truth was, as far as possible, kept back from the people, though known to the king and ministry. David Ramsay wrote and published the history of the war in South-Carolina, previous to that of the Revolution, giving a detail of the atrocities perpetrated, together with a correct history of all that transpired there ; and it was immediately



suppressed in England, and the sale forbidden. An anti-ministerial paper, of that day, contained a very humorous piece of poetry on the occasion, concluding with the following verse :

“Alas ! their chastisement is only begun,  
Thirteen are the States, and the tale is of one.  
When the twelve yet remaining, their stories have told,  
The King will run mad, and the book—will be sold.”



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